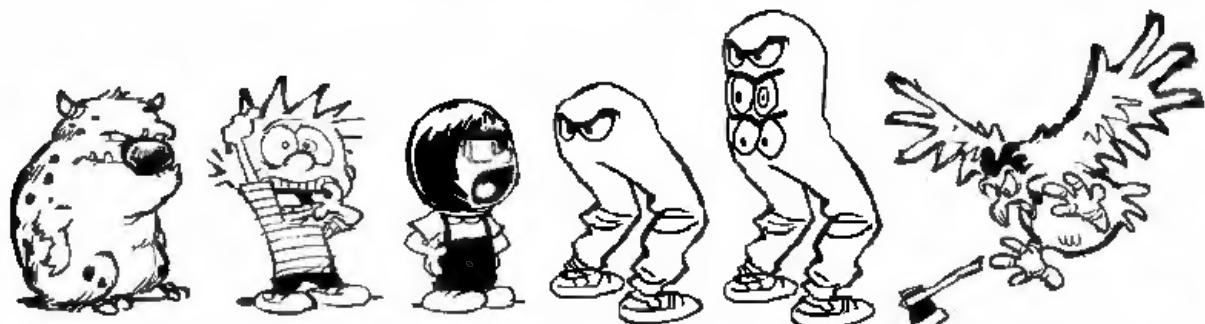


CALVIN THE ELDritch CULTIST

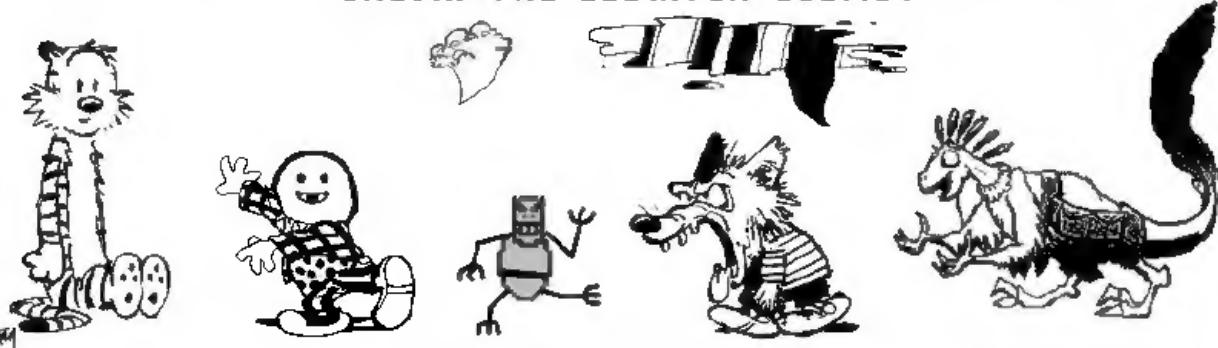


CALVIN THE ELDritch CULTIST



Chris Pirih

CALVIN THE ELDritch CULTIST



by

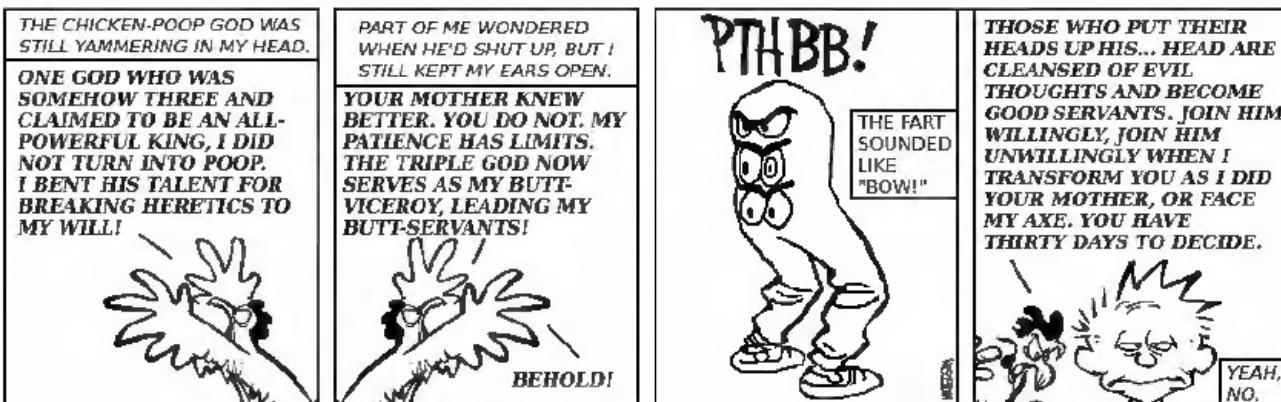
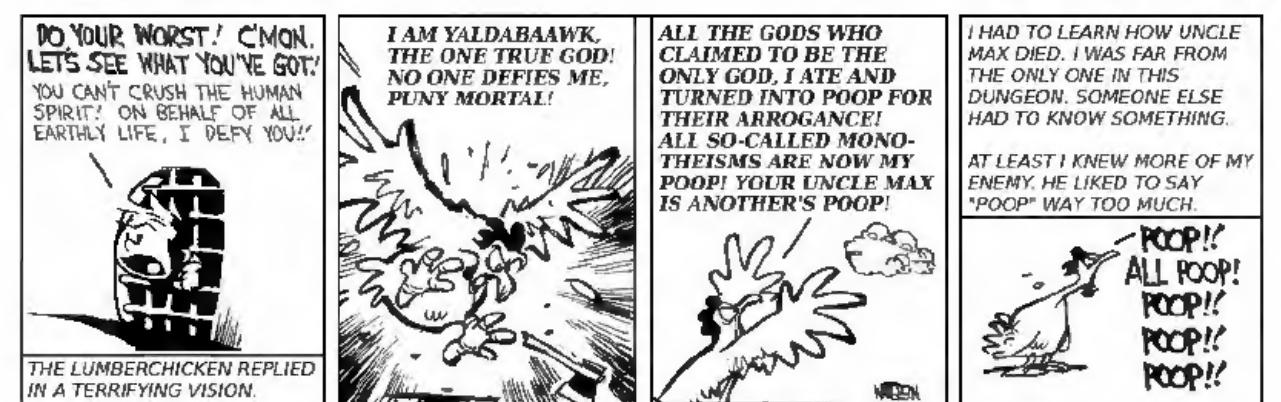
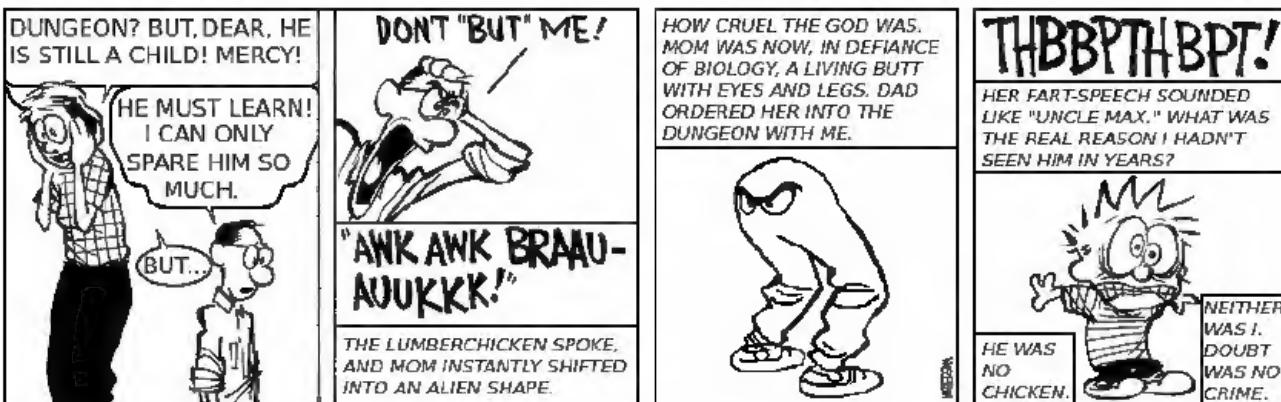
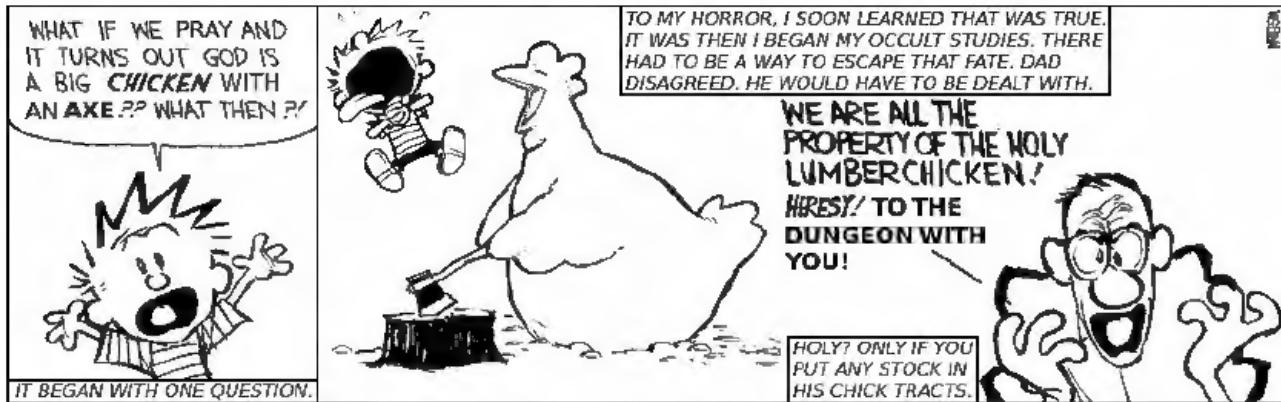
Episkopos Vorloth the Gridelin, Active Nihilist

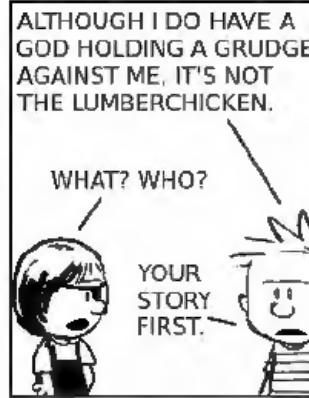
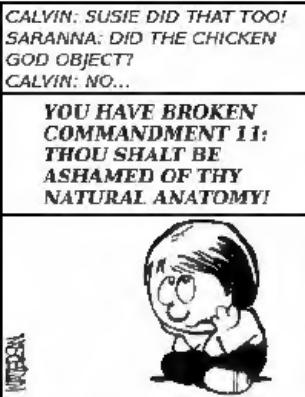
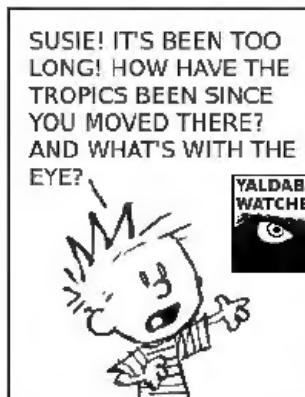
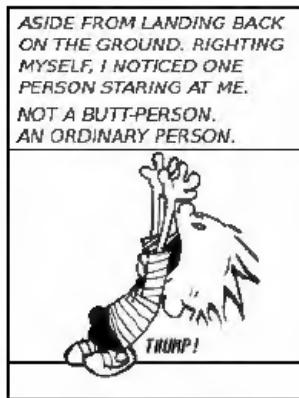
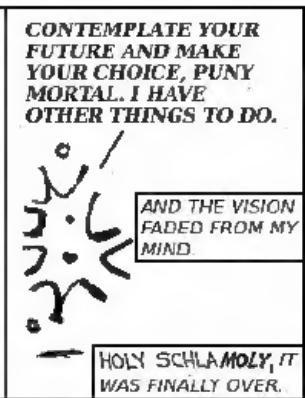
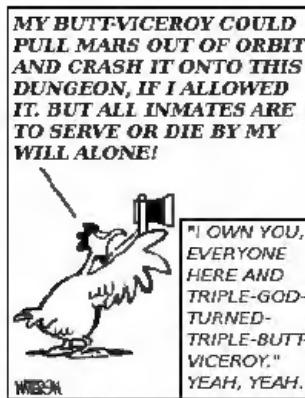
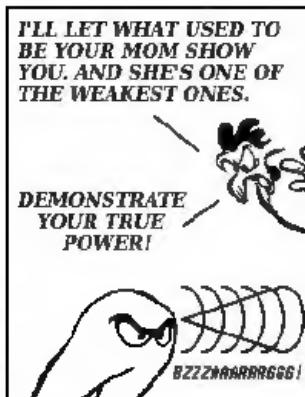
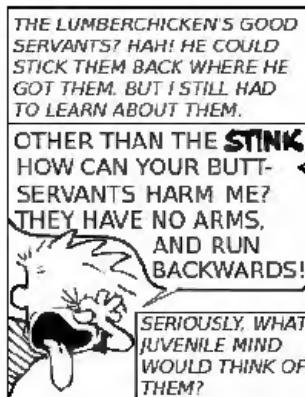
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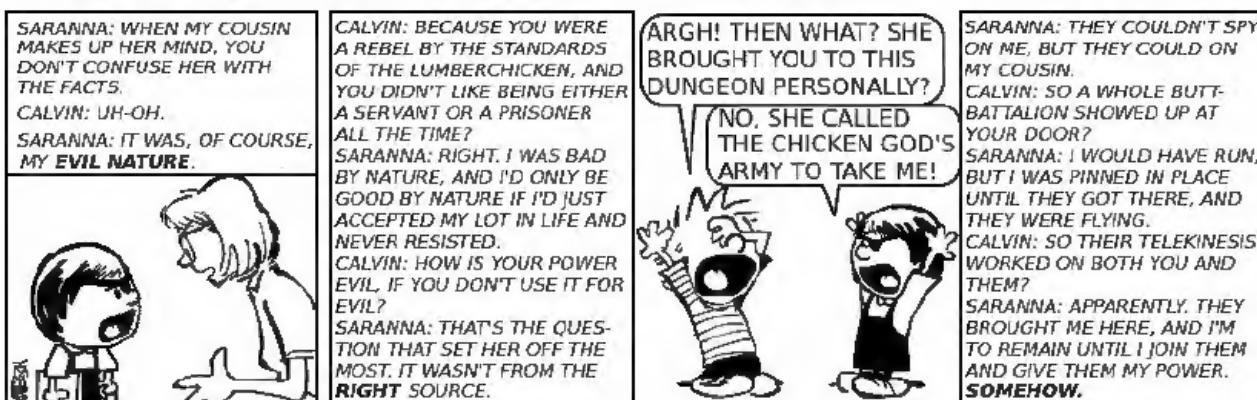
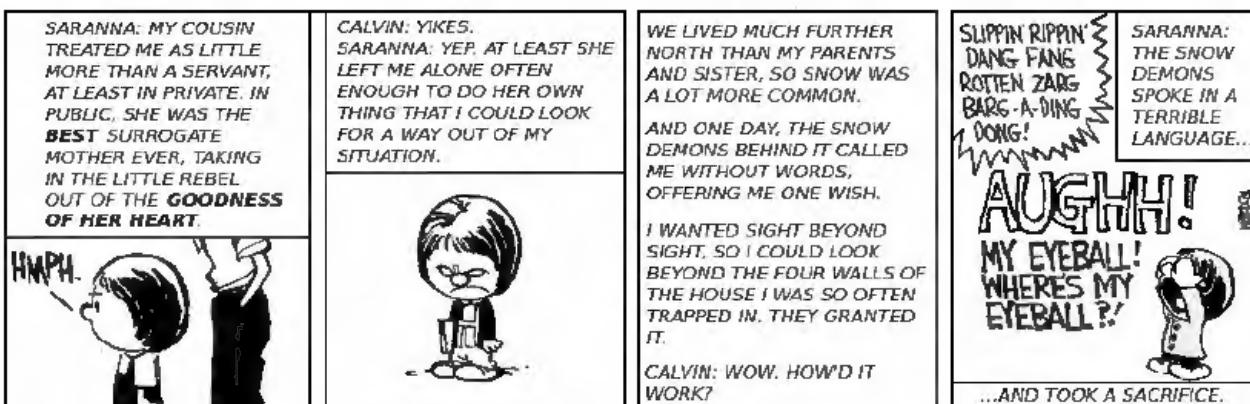
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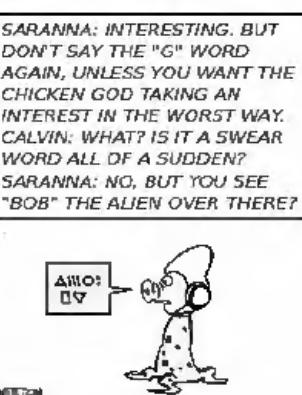
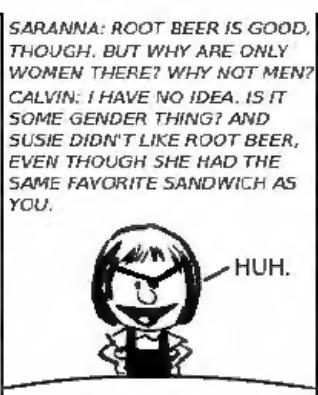
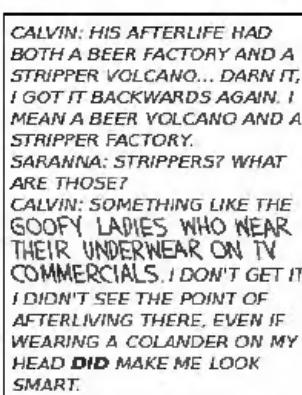
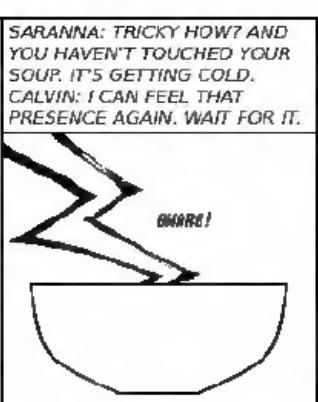
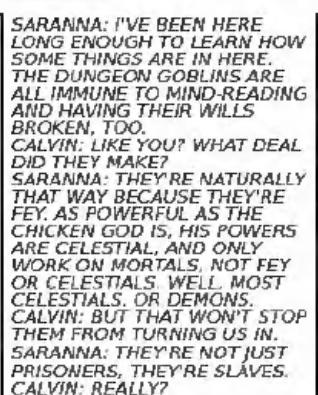
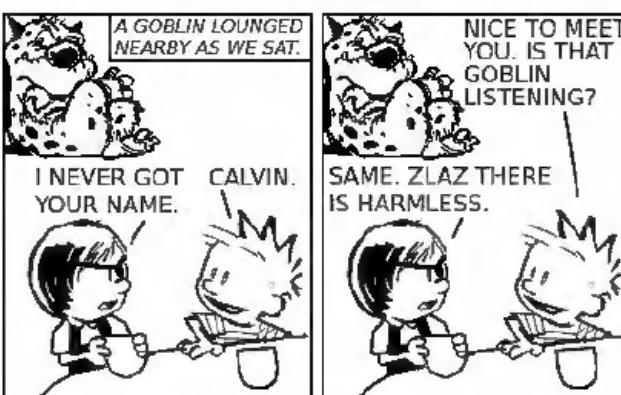
Song lyrics other than those of "The So-Called Healers" and the parody "Rock Me Amitayus" (the only shown portion of which is a public domain Buddhist proverb) are not mine; "The Banks of the Don" is traditional and public domain.

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"BOB" IS A TEMAHAZG, AN ALIEN SPECIES WITH SEVEN... "G-WORDS." THE CHICKEN GOD HAS DECLARED THAT EVERYONE HERE HAVE ONLY TWO, REGARDLESS.



CALVIN: BUT WHY? THERE ARE EARTH SPECIES THAT HAVE MORE THAN TWO, AND "BOB" ISN'T EVEN FROM EARTH!
SARANNA: I DON'T KNOW. BUT ANYONE WHO QUESTIONS IT GOES IN... THE LIGHT ROOM.
CALVIN: WHAT ROOM IS THAT?

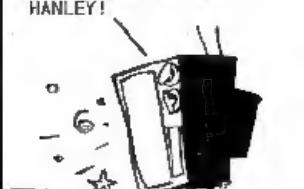


BACK TO YOUR STORY. WE DON'T HAVE LONG TILL LUNCH IS OVER, AND THEN IT'S DEMORALIZING HOUR. WAIT, WHAT DAY IS IT, WEDNESDAY OR THURSDAY?



CALVIN: THURSDAY. SO FUTILE LAWYER COMMERCIAL HOUR.

THEY DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT MONEY, BECAUSE IT'S TOO VULGAR! BUT MONEY ISN'T HEMORRHOID CREAM, IT'S MONEY! CALL JOEL "THE SLAMMER" HANLEY!



A ROOM WITH A VARYING NUMBER OF LIGHTS. TO GET OUT OF IT, YOU HAVE TO KEEP SAYING THERE ARE FIVE LIGHTS, NO MATTER HOW MANY THERE ARE.



CALVIN: WHAT IF SLIME MOLD IS IN THERE? ONE SPECIES OF IT HAS SEVEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY G-WORDS!
SARANNA: EEEW, GROSS!
CALVIN: GROSS THINGS ARE COOL! AND HOW WELL DOES THE LUMBERCHICKEN REALLY LISTEN?

SARANNA: YOU WEREN'T HERE FOR ANOTHER PRISONER FROM ANOTHER WORLD, C-H-E-N-D-A-R-R THE BARBARIAN. THAT WAS A FUN MONTH.
CALVIN: SOUNDS LIKE SAYING THAT ONE WORD ENOUGH IS A WAY TO SUMMON HIM, THEN!

CALVIN: WIZARDS? GRIMOIRES? IF YOU'RE LIKE SUSIE, YOU'RE READ A LOT MORE THAN I HAVE, BUT WHERE DID YOU FIND STUFF LIKE THAT?
SARANNA: I'LL TELL YOU TOMORROW. TRUST ME. I GUESS I AM A LOT LIKE SUSIE THAT WAY, BUT YOU'VE ALSO LEARNED SOME STUFF I DON'T KNOW. GO ON.
CALVIN: I KEPT LOOKING.



AMITABHA SEEMED LIKE A GOOD IDEA AT FIRST. MEDITATING AND CHANTING HIS NAME DID HELP ME TAP INTO... SOMETHING LIKE UNIVERSAL ONENESS.



BUT SITTING STILL FOR THAT LONG WASN'T MY THING, AND HIS IDEA OF COMPASSION WAS THAT IF SOMEONE BEAT ME UP, I SHOULD BE THANKFUL. THEY DIDN'T DO WORSE INSTEAD OF FIGHTING BACK. THAT'D ONLY MAKE THE MOES OF THE WORLD GET WORSE. ON THE OTHER HAND, CHANTING HIS NAME WAS EVEN EASIER ONCE I LEARNED HIS OTHER NAME, AMITAYUS.

SARANNA: WHY IS THAT?

CALVIN: SINGING HIS NAME WAS EASIER THAN CHANTING IT, AND THERE'S THIS SONG I

HEARD ON THE RADIO, "ROCK ME, AMADEUS..."

SARANNA: YOU DIDN'T AND THOSE DON'T QUITE RHYME!

CALVIN: I WASN'T TRYING TO OFFEND HIM! I DIDN'T WANT ANOTHER ENEMY! AT LEAST HE SEEMED TO UNDERSTAND, AND I LOOKED ELSEWHERE.

SARANNA: I SUPPOSE, MAYBE I SHOULD TELL THE DUNGEON GOBLIN CHORAL GROUP.

CALVIN: THEIR SARCASTIC TAKE ON "THE BANKS OF THE DON" WAS HILARIOUS!

♪ OUR WINDOWS ARE AIRY, AND BARRED UP BESIDE, TO KEEP OUR GOOD BORDERS FROM FALLING OUTSIDE! ♪



SARANNA: SO YOU DEALT WITH A LOT OF GODS AND GOD-LIKE ENTITIES. HOW MUCH MORE DID YOU HAVE TO SEARCH?
CALVIN: NOT LONG, IT TURNED OUT, BUT THERE WERE A FEW MORE TWISTS.



AT LEAST YOU WERE ABLE TO SEARCH. HAVING THE CHICKEN GOD SPY ON ME CUT OFF ALL MY OPTIONS. GETTING THE SNOW DEMONS' ATTENTION WAS MY BIG BREAK.



CALVIN: I'LL HAVE TO LOOK INTO THEM, BUT I TOOK TWO MORE STEPS TO GET HERE.

SARANNA: ONLY THAT MANY? GO ON.

CALVIN: THE NEXT THING I LOOKED INTO WAS A FORMER ENEMY OF THE BUTT-VICEROY, BEFORE THE LUMBERCHICKEN GIT HIS TALONS INTO HIM. HIS NAME WAS SATAN.

SARANNA: JUST BECAUSE HE'S YOUR ENEMY'S ENEMY, IT DOESN'T MAKE HIM YOUR FRIEND.

CALVIN: I KNOW. I NEEDED TO BE SURE. IT TURNED OUT HE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT EVIL WAS.

SARANNA: THAT MIGHT WORK. CALVIN: IT DIDN'T. HIS IDEA OF HELPING PEOPLE WAS MAKING THEM HAPPY BY DRIVING THEM MAD OR KILLING THEM. THEN IT TURNED OUT HE WAS NAMED AFTER HIS EVIL UNCLE, AND ALL MY DEALINGS WITH HIM TURNED OUT TO BE A CRAZY DREAM. AT LEAST I THINK SO.

SARANNA: BIZARRE.



SARANNA: WHY'D YOU WORK WITH AN ENEMY OF THE BUTT-VICEROY INSTEAD OF THE CHICKEN GOD?
CALVIN: ANYONE WHO'S SO GOOD AT BREAKING HERETICS THAT THEY'RE KEPT ALIVE FOR THAT IS STILL AN ENEMY.
SARANNA: RIGHT. WHO'D YOU CALL ON NEXT?
CALVIN: ACTUALLY, SHE CALLED ON ME.



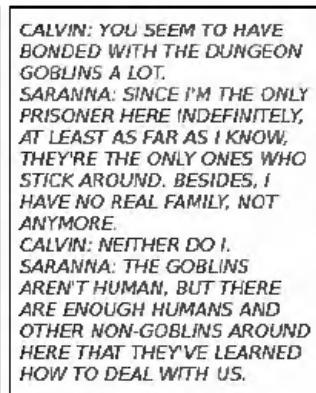
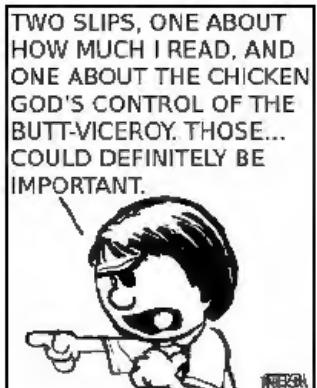
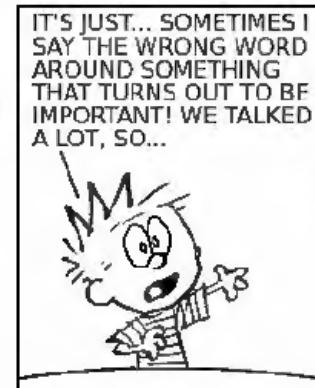
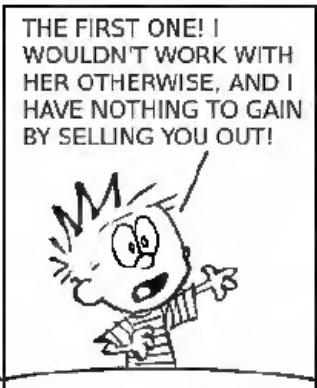
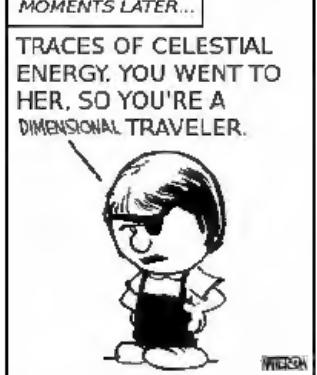
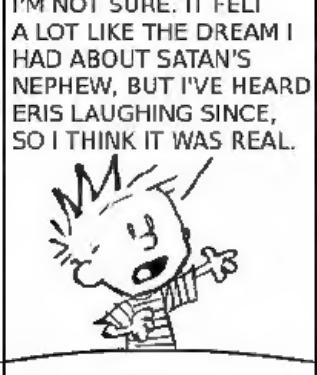
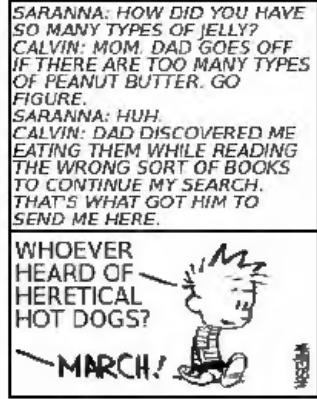
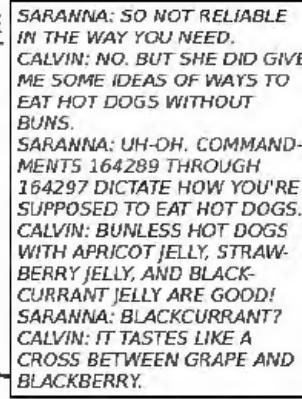
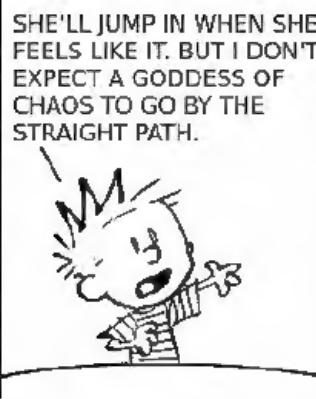
AFTER... A BAD EXPERIENCE PLAYING AN ORGANIZED SPORT AT RECESS, I'D COME UP WITH A COMPLETELY DISORGANIZED SPORT OF MY OWN.

CALVINBALL. WHERE I'D JUST MAKE UP THE RULES AS I WENT, BUT I HAD NO ONE TO PLAY IT WITH.



MAN, SHE PICKED UP THE NUANCES OF THIS GAME FAST!

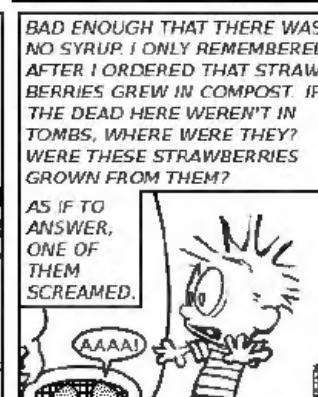
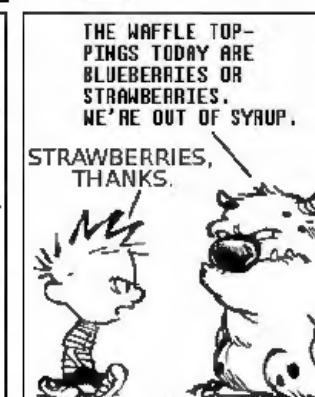
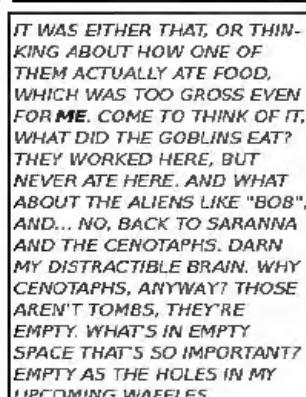
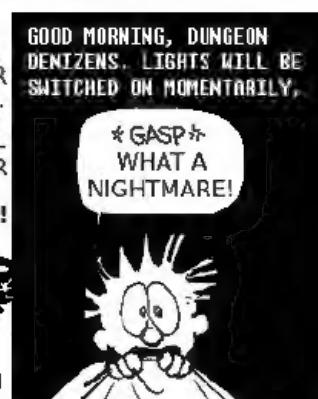
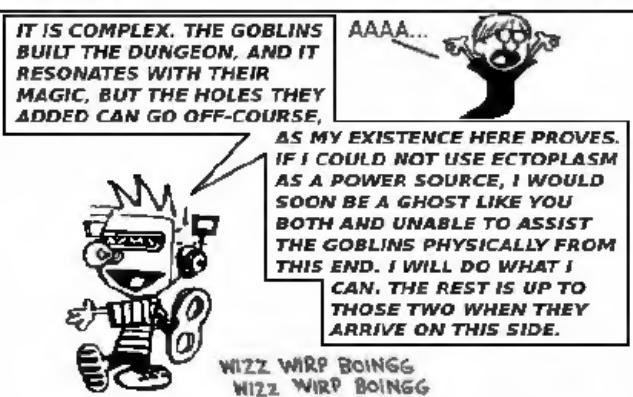
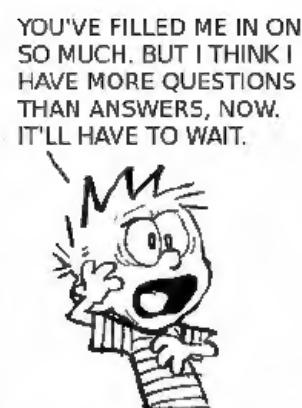
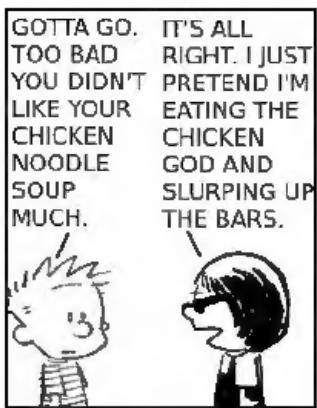




DOES THAT MEAN THAT THEY KNOW SECRET WAYS AROUND...

BONNNNGGG!

DARN. LUNCHTIME'S OVER.



I PANICKED. IF ANYONE ELSE HAD HEARD THAT, I WAS UP FOR PUNISHMENT. NO ONE WOULD BELIEVE THAT THE STRAWBERRY HAD SCREAMED ON ITS OWN, AND COMMANDMENT 98304, "THOU SHALT NOT PERFORM WORDLESS STRAWBERRY VENTRILISM," WAS CLEARLY SHOWN ON THE FOOD COMMANDMENTS WALL IN FRONT OF ME.



LUCKILY, IT SEEMED I WAS THE ONLY ONE. WHAT WAS UP?

THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH YOUR STRAWBERRIES. TAKE YOUR FOOD AND GO. HUMANS, SOMETIMES...



IF I HAD ONLY KNOWN WHAT WAS HAPPENING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF A HOLE...

CAREFUL, BRIAN! WE DON'T NEED RUMBLE TO SCARE HIM!

WEAKENING THE BARRIER BETWEEN OUR SIDE AND HIS CAUSES SIDE EFFECTS.



AS A GHOST, YOU COULD SPEAK THROUGH THE STRAWBERRIES OF THE DEAD AND REASSURE HIM THAT NOTHING IS WRONG. THERE IS NO COMMANDMENT AGAINST SPOKEN STRAWBERRY VENTRILISM.

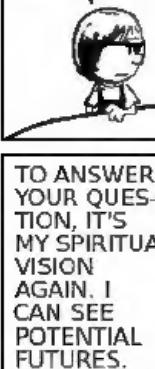
YET, AND THAT WOULD MAKE THINGS WORSE.



I KEPT SENSING WEIRD THINGS THROUGHOUT THE DAY, AND WHEN I MET SARANNA AT LUNCH, SHE WAS DISTRACTED.

CRAP ON A CRUTCH, MY SPIRITUAL VISION'S BEEN GOING CRAZY TODAY!

WHERE'D YOU PICK UP THAT PHRASE?



SO THAT PHRASE WAS FROM THERE? AND IT'S ALSO HOW YOU KNEW YOUR SOUP TODAY?



SARANNA-VISION: ANOTHER ALTERNATE FUTURE DIMENSION IN SPACE... WAIT, WHEN AND WHERE ARE WE AGAIN?

SAY THAT AGAIN, CALVIN?

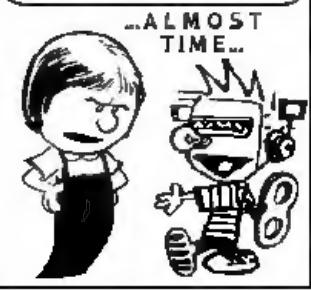


I SAID THERE ARE TWO OF ME! AND THE OTHER ME IS A ROBOT! DON'T YOU SEE IT TOO?



NOW I DO, AND THERE ARE ALSO TWO OF ME. BUT I CAN'T HEAR THEM THAT WELL.

...ALMOST TIME...



TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTION, IT'S MY SPIRITUAL VISION AGAIN. I CAN SEE POTENTIAL FUTURES.

IS IT RELATED TO WHAT YOU SAID YOU'D SHOW ME?



SARANNA: YES TO BOTH. THE EGG DROP SOUP WAS THE MOST LIKELY OPTION AT 99%. THE OPTION AT 1% WAS POTATO SOUP.

CALVIN: SO IT'S NOT CERTAIN? SARANNA: ONE THING I'VE LEARNED FROM MY VISION IS THAT NOTHING'S CERTAIN. I CAN ALWAYS DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT FROM WHAT I'VE SEEN MYSELF DO IN THE FUTURE. I'VE DONE IT BEFORE.

CALVIN: HOW DID YOU GET CAPTURED AND BROUGHT HERE, SINCE YOU COULD SEE IT COMING?

SARANNA: IT WOULD HAVE ENDED BADLY IF I'D RESISTED OR RUN. I RISKED LIFTING THE EYEPATCH TO CHECK.

CALVIN: TO GET MORE THAN GLIMPSES OF THE FUTURE?

SARANNA: I CAN SEE THE FUTURE EITHER WAY, BUT THE EYEPATCH BLUNTS IT ENOUGH THAT I HAVE TO CONCENTRATE A LOT MORE TO PICK IT UP. AND I SOMETIMES GET ALTERNATE FUTURES. THOSE USUALLY MEAN THAT MY VISION'S TRYING TO KEEP ME ALIVE BY HINTING AT SOMETHING. IT HAS A MIND OF ITS OWN SOMETIMES.

WATSON
AN ALTERNATE FUTURE IN AN ICE AGE? THE FURNACE'S GOING TO GO OUT AND GIVE ME HYPOTHERMIA!

DOES IT TELL YOU ANYTHING ABOUT THE WEIRDNESS HAPPENING TO US BOTH RIGHT NOW?

TALKING ABOUT THAT HERE COULD ALERT THE CHICKEN GOD.



ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT I KNEW THIS WOULD HAPPEN TODAY, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW EXACTLY HOW IT WOULD.

IS IT RELATED TO WHAT YOU SAID YOU'D SHOW ME?



YES. HOLD OUT UNTIL CENOTAPH HOUR, AND I'LL LEAD YOU RIGHT TO ONE YOU'LL DEFINITELY WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT.



I WAS SO CURIOUS THAT I COULD BARELY FINISH MY SOUP, BUT I MADE IT. AFTER GETTING THE USUAL SPEECH FROM THE LUMBERCHICKEN ABOUT HOW THIS WAS WHAT THE DEFIDENT DESERVED, THEY WEREN'T EVEN BURIED HERE, THEY ONLY GOT MARKERS AS A SHOW OF HOW LITTLE REMEMBERED THEY WERE, AND SO ON, I WAS READY TO SEE WHAT ALL THE FUSS WAS ABOUT. BESIDES, SARANNA LIKELY KNEW WHO SOME OF THE MARKERS REFERRED TO, GIVEN ALL THAT SHE'D PICKED UP IN HER LONG STAY HERE. I WASN'T IGNORANT, BUT I STILL HAD MUCH TO LEARN.

WATSON AND LEARN, I WOULD...

D C LL W SG
IT'S THAT ONE OVER THERE, WITH THE ONE ON THE FAR RIGHT.



U NZ V + S A
HOW CAN YOU TELL IT APART FROM THE OTHER "M" MARKERS?

LOOK AT IT MORE CLOSELY.



SEE WHAT'S SCRATCHED BELOW THE "M"?

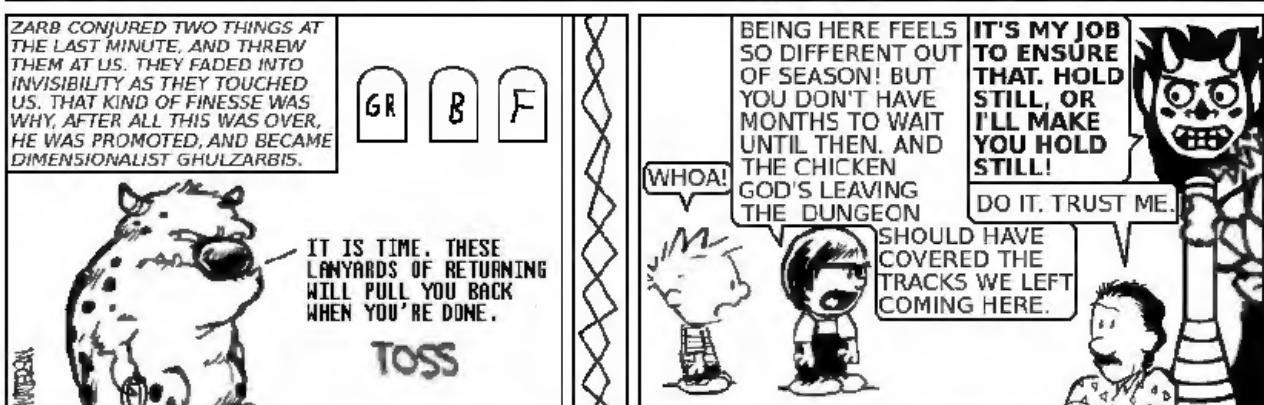
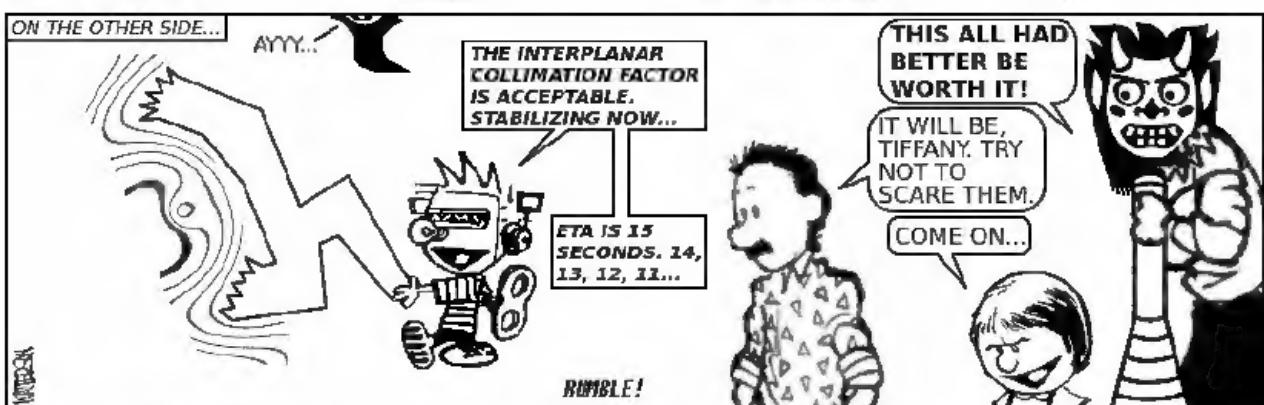
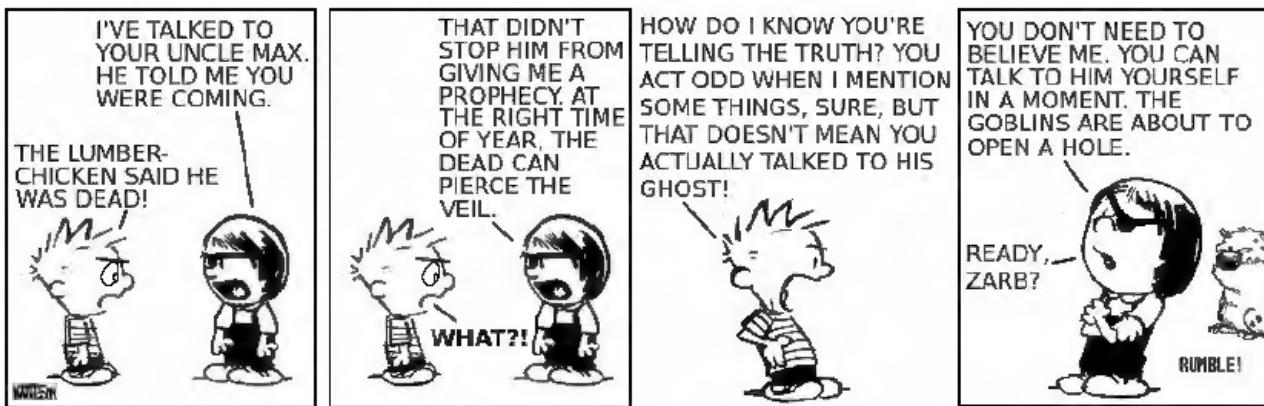


"HELLO, C." AND THE NUMBER FROM THAT GUESSING GAME I PLAYED WITH UNCLE MAX WHEN I LAST SAW HIM!



THE GAME...
IS IT 92,376,051? BY GEORGE, IT IS!





TAKING ON THE BUTT-ARMY WOULD BE EASY WITH THEIR LEADER DEAD. THE RULES ALLOW FOR THAT CASE. I AND MY KIN COULD GO TO THEM.

AS IT STANDS, I MUST STAY IN THIS REALM AND KEEP GUARD-ING IT.



IT SEEMS THAT THE PROPHECY GUIDES US, SO THE CHICKEN'S FATE IS IN YOU MORTALS' HANDS, NOT MINE.



WHICH IS A SHAME.

THE HULKING CREATURE THEN PICKED UP HER CLUB AND JNSCREWD ITS END. IT WAS NOT A WEAPON, BUT ACTUALLY A MASSIVE THERMOS. AND IT SMELLED OF THE STRONGEST COFFEE EVER. SHE CHUGGED DOWN A HEALTHY AMOUNT. MUTTERED UNDER HER BREATH ABOUT HOW HER PAPERWORK WAS NEVER DONE AND HOW HER SISTER ROSE GOT TO GO TO WAR ALL THE TIME WHILE GUARDING HER HELL-REALM TURNED ON HER HEELS, AND RAN FROM OUR SIGHT FASTER THAN ANYONE EXPECTED HER TO BE ABLE TO MOVE.

WHY DOES SHE DRINK COFFEE INSTEAD OF ALCOHOL, AND WHY DOES HER FAMILY HAVE NON-JAPANESE NAMES?

I ASKED ONCE SHE WOULD ONLY SAY SHE WAS ATYPICAL.

WOW.



I HADN'T SAID MUCH SINCE WE ARRIVED, BUT I WAS STILL IN SHOCK. SARANNA HAD BEEN HERE AT LEAST ONCE BEFORE, AND OBVIOUSLY KNEW OF ONI.

SO WHAT DO WE DO NOW? WHAT IS THE PROPHECY?



AND WHY ARE YOU HERE, UNCLE MAX? AND IS THAT A GHOST OF CHICKEN POOP THERE?

AS FOR HOW I GOT HERE, DIED THIS IS A GHOST REALM FOR THOSE WITH UNFINISHED BUSINESS. BUT YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW I DIED SARANNA, YOU NEED TO KNOW THIS TOO.

TIME HAS STOPPED FOR YOU BOTH OUTSIDE HERE.



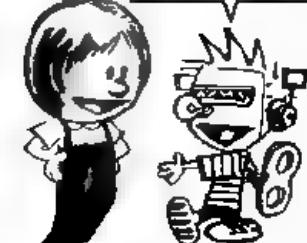
THE PROPHECY IS WHAT WILL HELP US TAKE THE LUMBERCHICKEN DOWN FOR GOOD. IT WOULD BE EASIER IF TIFFANY ATE HIM, YES, BUT BREAKING IT, OR TRYING TO, IS HOW BRAN GOT HERE.

SUSIE, BRIAN, YOU CAN COME OUT NOW!



SARANNA! IT'S BEEN SO LONG! HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?

SALUTATIONS TO BOTH OF YOU!



BRIAN, IT IS A LONG STORY THAT INVOLVES ME AS WELL. MAX YES, BUT FOR YOU TO TRULY UNDERSTAND. ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE LUMBERCHICKEN'S SPECIAL PUNISHMENTS?

BRIAN, YOU SHOULD BE, GIVEN THAT THE UPCOMING HOLIDAY OF CHICKMAS INVOLVES THEM CALVIN. YES, THE LESSON GOT POUNDED INTO ME LAST WEEK DURING SPECIAL CONVERSATION HOUR. AFTER THE BUTT VICEROY MADE SOME PRISONERS GOOD SERVANTS. MAX GOOD SERVANTS? I'D CALL THEM BUTTHEADERS. GIVEN WHAT HAPPENS TO THEM CALVIN, I'LL HAVE TO REMEMBER THAT! SARANNA, CALVIN GO ON!

BRIAN THE PROPHECY-BENDING ROBOT? THAT WAS ODD.

MY ORIGINAL NAME IS B-DPGWKLHPTPN-783458-4265457242423820978-2429580182546288260, BUT THE NON-ROBOTICS IN THIS DIMENSION PREFER SHORTER TERMS, SO BRIAN WILL DO.

THAT WAS LESS ODD.

THE PROPHECY REFERS TO THE CHAMPION'S ARRIVING AT A TIME OF DOUBLE WAR. AS WE KNOW, CHICKMAS IS THE TIME WHEN THE LUMBERCHICKEN SIRENS A CHICK, FINDS OUT THAT IT HAS TOO MUCH FREE WILL IN THE EGG, KILLS IT AS COMPETITION, AND FEEDS IT TO HIS TRUE FOLLOWERS. THE WAR OF CHICKMAS IS FOUGHT OVER HOW THE EGG IS COOKED AND SERVED THIS YEAR. THE SIDES ARE EITHER OMELET OR FRITTATA. ANY ACKNOWLEDGING OF NON-CHICKEN HOLIDAYS DURING THIS TIME IS CALLED THE WAR ON CHICKMAS.

I'M NOT LOOKING FORWARD TO THE LUMBERCHICKEN'S STRUTTING AROUND WEARING THAT FAKE PLUMAGE AND DEMANDING EVERYONE CALL HIM "BIG HIGH WAR CHICKEN" FOR A DAY.

NEITHER AM I.



ONLY HIS FANATICS DO AND THE DUNGEON GOBLINS COMPLETELY DESPISE IT. HE EXTENDED ONE OF THE WARS OF CHICKMAS TO CONQUER AND ENSLAVE THEM IN THE FIRST PLACE.



AFTER HE MADE THEM BUILD THE DUNGEON, HE STARTED GIVING HIS SPECIAL PUNISHMENTS TO ANY PRISONER IN IT WHO ESPECIALLY DEFIED HIM. TRANSFORMING THEM INTO BUTT PEOPLE WAS STANDARD. TRANSFORMING THEM INTO OTHER THINGS WAS SPECIAL. AND THE LOSERS OF THE WAR OF CHICKMAS DESERVED SPECIAL TREATMENT.



CALVIN, YES, HE TOLD ME ABOUT THAT MAX, BUT DID HE TELL YOU WHAT SOME OF HIS SPECIFIC PUNISHMENTS WERE?

CALVIN, NO, I THINK HE WAS RELYING MORE ON THE CONSTANT THREAT OF THEM. MAX HE'D MAKE HALF-THINGS OUT OF PEOPLE. HALF OYSTER AND HALF CARROT WERE ESPECIALLY FRIGHTENING. BUT HE CAME UP WITH NEW ONES AS TIME WENT ON. YOU THINK HAVING HIM EAT YOU AND TURN YOU INTO POOP IS BAD? TRY WHEN HE DIVINELY KILLS YOU AFTERWARD AND TURNS YOU INTO A POOP GHOST!

CALVIN, ONE THAT CAN'T TALK? MAX EXACTLY!

THE LAST TIME I VISITED, I COULD SENSE THAT MY BROTHER WAS PLANNING SOMETHING. SO I GOT AS FAR AWAY AS I COULD.

WHICH IS WHY YOU WERE GONE FOR SO LONG? I WONDERED.



MAX HAD ALWAYS HAD A TENDENCY TO BE FANATICAL, BUT IT WAS USUALLY AT A MANAGEABLE LEVEL. THIS TIME SOMETHING I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAD SHIFTED IN HIM. I HAD TO FIND OUT MORE.



I REALLY WISH I'D BEEN ABLE TO TAKE YOU WITH ME.

HECK, I'LL COME WITH YOU! SO LONG, MOM! BYE, DAD!

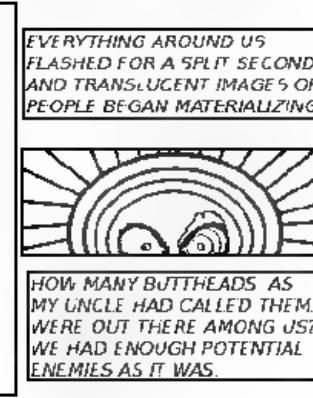
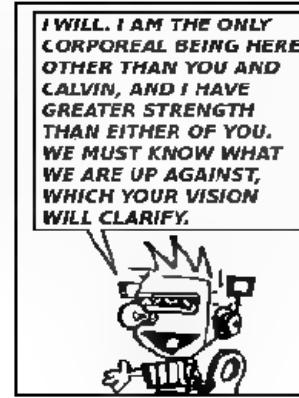
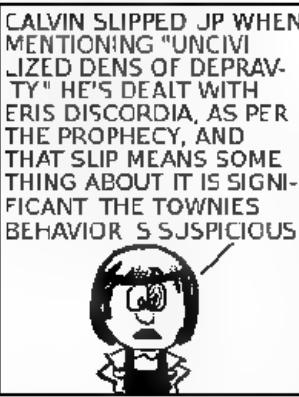
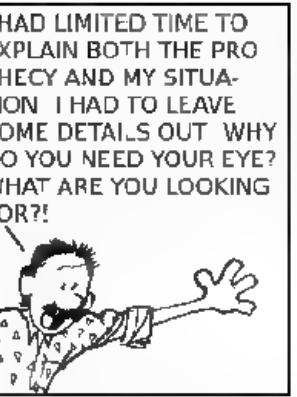
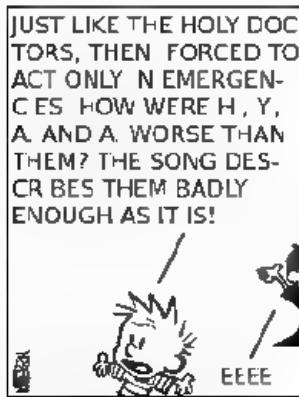
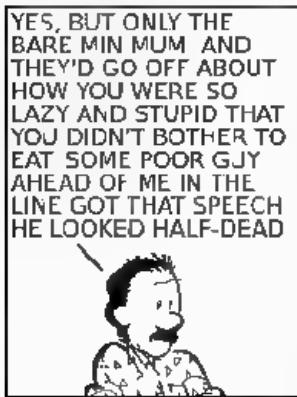
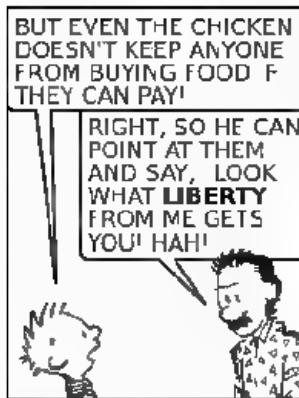
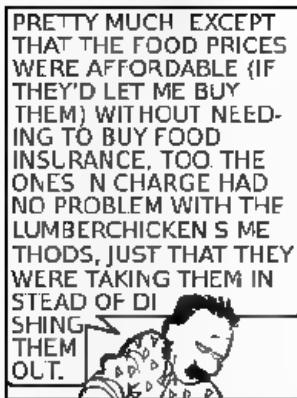
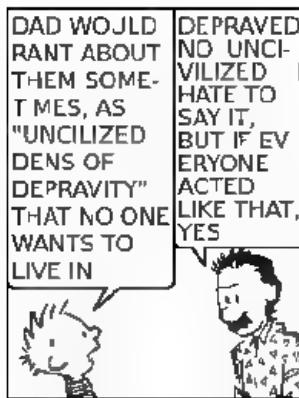
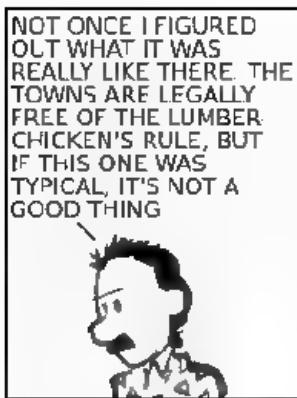
CALVIN, GET BACK HERE!



AND YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE WHERE I EVENTUALLY ENDED UP!

WITH ALL I'VE BEEN THROUGH IN THE LAST TWO WEEKS, MAYBE NOT!







AFTER HER EXHAUSTIVE SCAN

DO NOT WORRY.
I HAVE YOU.



OF THE SIXTY EIGHT PEOPLE YOU DEALT WITH OVER YOUR SIX WEEKS THERE, SIXTY THREE WERE AS FREE AS YOU ARE, MAX UUUUHHH ..



SO ONLY A FEW NEED TO BE AGENTS, AND THE REST FOLLOW THEM BY CHOICE? HOW DOOMED ARE WE, PROPHECY NOTWITHSTANDING?



TO BE CLEAR, THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH LIBERTY OR FREE CHOICE, BUT WHEN YOU NEED SOMETHING YOU CAN'T GET YOURSELF OR DO YOURSELF IF OTHER PEOPLE DON'T HAVE TO DO THINGS, MOST OF THEM WON'T DO THEM

THEY'RE JUST BIGGER KIDS?



NEED

UNFORTUNATELY, YES.

IT MAY NOT BE AS BAD AS YOU THINK. PER MY ANALYSIS, THE NON-AGENTS DID NOT APPEAR TO RECOGNIZE THE AGENTS AS SUCH, SO THEY ARE NOT KNOWINGLY SERVING.

NOT MUCH BETTER.



SINCE YOU SURVIVED FOR SIX WEEKS THERE, I GUESS YOU FOUND A WAY AROUND THE LACK OF AVAILABLE FOOD?

YES, SMUGGLERS. AT LEAST I DIDN'T GET SICK BEFORE I FOUND THEM



AND SPEAKING OF SICKNESS, HOW ABOUT THAT SONG? ONCE SARANNA'S HAD ENOUGH TIME TO RECOVER, OF COURSE

I'VE NEVER HEARD IT, EITHER, BUT MY SISTER COMES FIRST



UHJHHH . I'LL NEED ABOUT FIFTEEN MINUTES. GRAVITY, OR WHATEVER PASSES FOR IT HERE, IS REALLY WEIRD



NEED

▀ The So Called Healers ▀

Hurmdel and Yoomnac, Arlon Acceo,
Always were using their right to say no!
Acceo Arlon, Yoomnac and Hurmdel,
Were healers who let their patients go to, well ..
H and then Y, and A, and then A!
The Chicken God looked upon them one day
And praised them for killing the useless vermin.
(Not!) Lifting one finger and letting them terminate
Ate in the name of His holy Work Ethic!
Improving His servant stock wasn't malefic!

By using their Authority to deflect all Blame,
Truth no longer mattered! Death to all the amel.
The Chicken god ad from their lack of al shame,
Made them demigods! They were so pleased, they came.
To the Bahamas! Why, what did you think?

Their goals and the Chicken's were now all in sync.
Put in charge of all healthcare before they could blink!
No man could bypass them, or he'd be a fink!
"Cleanse my planet's blood of its contamination!"
He charged, and left. How to their imagination

"You're lying! You're lazy! It's all in your head!"
Were just a small bit of the things that they said.
And what they put on paper was always believed.
"Two plus two is five. You don't like that? Then leave!"
They'd throw temper tantrums and then run away.
Unprofessional? Hah! They got paid anyway!
Rich patients were different. They were worthy of fe
The four treated them reverently and without strife.
The treatment they got was all behind closed doors.
Confidential, to hide how the four were all hor

▀ The So Called Healers ▀ (Part 2)

If they're efficient at serving the Chicken!
But this didn't last. The pot started to ticken.
They started believing that they were the gods
And the Chicken they claimed to serve was just a fraud!
They spilled more and more blood, past the point of all reason.
Killing people who could at least praise Him? 'Twas treason!
So what the Chicken God gave, He then took away.
"No more gods before me, or looking sideways
At me! For I am the only One!"
My Archons on other worlds can have the r fun,

But here, I will always win!" So He said
And the four so-called healers were instantly dead

WHO CAME UP WITH THAT? IT'S MOST OF THE TRUTH, YES, BUT SOME PARTS OF IT

UH . . . SOME PEOPLE ENJOY THEMSELVES WAY TOO MUCH THERE

THE TEACHERS WOULD GO BONKERS OVER THE BAHAMAS REFERENCE. WHY IS THAT?

AND THEY WANT TO GO THERE AS A REWARD FOR BEING ABLE TO KILL A LOT MORE PEOPLE?
EESH!

IMAGINE WHAT I THINK NOW, YEARS LATER



IT WAS THE SECRET POLICE FORMED TO UP-HOLD WHAT THE OLD TRINITY CALLED "MORALITY" WHEN THE LUM-BERCHICKEN TOOK OVER AND TURNED THEM INTO THE BUTT FATHER, THE BUTT SON, AND THE HOLY FART SPIRT IN ONE BODY, HE TOOK IT OVER, TOO. AND MADE IT HIS ANTI HER ESY SQUAD

YOU, SARANNA, AND SUSIE LIVED THROUGH SOME OF THE TRINITY ERA, BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH YOU TWO REMEMBER OF IT

NOT MUCH.

A LOT

WHAT DID MY BROTHER SHOW YOU?

OOOO

PIECES OF A HORROR MOVE THAT SHOWED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF I DIDN'T SHAPE UP.

MAX. WHICH ONE? CALVIN: "THE EXORCIST" IF I DIDN'T FOLLOW ALL THE RIGHT RULES, I'D END UP POSSESSED MAX. *SPEECHLESS* CALVIN: FIGURED SOMETHING CHANGED WHEN SUDDENLY SOME LINES IN IT SHIFTED. "THE POWER OF CHRIST COMPELS YOU" BECAME "THE POWER OF CHICKEN COMPELS YOU" BUT THE LINE ABOUT THE MOTHER DOING WEIRD STUFF WITH ROOSTERS IN HELL STAYED THE SAME. JESS ALL THE LUMBER-CHICKEN'S DEAD SONS FROM THE WARS OF CHICKMAS WERE THERE?

MAX: NEVER MIND. GODS SARANNA, SO WHAT DID THE MORAL GUARDIAN SQUAD DO?

THEY DECIDED TO TAKE ALL THE SONGS ON THE ALBUM SERIOUSLY, AND ASSUMED WE WERE A TRIO OF OCCULTIST CRIMINALS. I DON'T KNOW WHY WE GOT PUNISHED WHEN THE OTHER BANDS DIDN'T.

SOMETIMES YOU'RE JUST A TARGET BECAUSE THEY NEED ONE AS YOU AND OUR PARENTS WOULD KNOW

THAT WAS... NOT A GOOD DECEMBER.

DID THEY PUT YOU IN JAIL?

YES, FOR THE WHOLE MONTH, PROCLAIMING HOW GENEROUS THEY WERE FOR NOT DOING WORSE.

WAIT! MUSICIANS JAILED IN DECEMBER OVER SACRILEGE AGAINST THE TRINITY? THE ONE THAT LED TO COMMANDMENT 72. "THOU SHALT NOT USE THE WORD 'QUASAR' AS A SWEAR WORD, FOR IT IS THE WORST OF ABOMINATIONS!"

YES, BUT IT WAS REALLY "FAUSTUS" DEAL IT LED TO A RIOT OVER FREE SPEECH, WHERE THE RIOTERS ALL CHANTED IT, AND THE LUMBER-CHICKEN BANNED THAT USE OF THE WORD OFFICIALLY WHEN HE TOOK OVER

BUT I DON'T THINK IT'S COMMANDMENT 72. 72 IS AGAINST EATING HAM BURGERS WITH MAYONNAISE

I'VE HEARD SO MANY, I SOME TIMES CAN'T KEEP THE NUMBERS STRAIGHT

IT'S NOT 73, EITHER. 73 IS AGAINST EATING HAM BURGERS WITH MAYONNAISE AND EXTRA PICKLES.

I NEVER BROKE THOSE. MY COUSIN REFUSED TO LET ME EAT HAMBURGERS BECAUSE SHE SAID THEY RESEMBLED BREASTS.

ACCORDING TO MY DATABASE, IT IS COMMANDMENT 74. COMMANDMENT 75 IS AGAINST REPEATING THE NUMBER SIX MORE THAN TWICE IN A ROW, SINCE MY PROCESSOR IS BASE THIRTY-SIX, OR SIX PLUS SIX PLUS SIX PLUS SIX PLUS SIX PLUS SIX, I AM AN ABOMINATION AS WELL, COMPARED TO THE BASE TWO MACHINES OF THIS DIMENSION.

AREN'T YOU AN ABOMINATION IN THE CHICKEN'S EYES ANYWAY, FOR BEING A MACHINE?

NO, I COULD BE REPROGRAMMED TO SERVE HIM, AND I AM IN A FORM THAT IS NOT ALIEN BY HIS STANDARDS, SUCH AS THEY ARE.

ALTHOUGH MY BEING AN ALTERNATE UNIVERSE VERSION OF YOU COULD LIKELY SET HIM OFF REGARDLESS, BUT WE ARE GETTING AHEAD OF OURSELVES

IT'S FUNNY DAD WOULD OBJECT TO THE NUMBER SIX IN GENERAL

THAT'S IN THE UNWRITTEN COMMANDMENTS THE CHICKEN SEES HIMSELF AS THE CONSERVER OF ORDER, SO YOU HAVE TO BE A "GOOD CONSERVATIVE" TO EVEN START FOLLOWING HIM

NO "WRONG IDEAS."

I'M SURE MY BROTHER MADE SURE YOU WERE NEVER EXPOSED TO ANY "WRONG IDEAS" WHENEVER HE COULD.

IS THE "ONLY TWO GENDERS" IDEA ONE OF THEM?

OOPS! SAID THE G WORD! CAN HE HEAR THAT?

RELAX HE CAN'T HEAR ANYTHING WE SAY HERE, ESPECIALLY WITH TIME FROZEN

SO MY BROTHER'S NOT PERFECT, NO MATTER WHAT HE TRIES TO CLAIM WHERE'D YOU LEARN ABOUT IT?

SOME BOOKS ON ANIMALS. DAD NEVER KNEW ABOUT SLIME MOLD

I MENTIONED SPERM WHALES TO HIM, BUT HE WAS WEIRD ABOUT IT IF I SAID "SPERM WHALE," HE WAS FINE, BUT IF I SAID "SPERM" ON ITS OWN, HE'D LOSE IT. THAT'S ANOTHER WORD YOU CAN ONLY SAY THE "RIGHT" WAY, I GUESS?

YES. ONLY TWO GENDERS, NOT SAYING "SPERM" EXCEPT IN VERY CERTAIN, PROPER CIRCUMSTANCES, ETC.? ALL UNWRITTEN RULES. FOR NOW

"HEY, CHICKEN! YOU'RE A SIX-GENDERED SPERM QUASAR! HA HA!"

'D NEVER BEEN ABLE TO FIND WORK IN THE OLD LIBERTY TOWN, AND I WAS LOW ON MONEY WHEN I LEFT. SO IT WAS A STROKE OF LUCK THAT WAS ABLE TO FIND A NEW LIBERTY TOWN THAT GAVE ME A BETTER DEAL.



ESPECIALLY FOR REBELLING IN PRE-CHICKEN TIMES. SOME TOWNS WOULD DEMAND SOMETHING CURRENT, SINCE THE CHICKEN HAD TAKEN OVER BY THEN. I HAD HIGH ENOUGH STATUS THAT PEOPLE DIDN'T DARE CHEAT ME TO MY FACE.



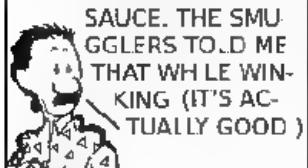
RIGHT. THOSE TOWNIES WOULD TELL YOU THEY'D DO THINGS, AND THEN BLOW YOU OFF WITH, "WHEN I SAID THAT, I WAS JUST TRYING TO BE NICE" OR THEY'D DO THINGS EXACTLY ONCE IN PUBLIC, TELL YOU TO "CALL ME IF YOU NEED ANYTHING," AND GET ENRAGED IF YOU ACTUALLY DID THAT, BECAUSE THEY WERE "BUSY"



SERIOUSLY, THE ONLY GOOD THINGS ABOUT THE OLD TOWN WERE THAT THE SMUGGLERS WERE FRIENDLY AND THE BARBECUED MUTTON THEY HAD THERE WAS TO DIE FOR.. IF YOU COULD GET YOUR HANDS ON IT



NO THE CHICKEN'S COMMANDMENTS SEEM TO BE BASED ON WHIMS MORE THAN ENJOYMENT. THERE WERE ONLY TWO ADDED WHILE I WAS THERE. 476268 BANNED MIXING GRITS AND PIZZA SAUCE. THE SMUGGLERS TOLD ME THAT WHILE WINNING (IT'S ACTUALLY GOOD)

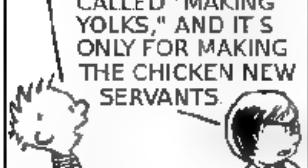


AND 476269 BANNED USING "EQJALS SIGN NO LONGER REQUIRED AS A EUPHEMISM FOR UH, MATING. LIBERTY TOWNS ARE EXEMPT FROM ALL BUT THE FIRST TEN COMMANDMENTS, SO THE OTHERS ONLY COME UP AS BARTRIVIA, AND I HAPPENED TO OVERHEAR SOMEONE TALKING ABOUT IT AS THEY WALKED BY

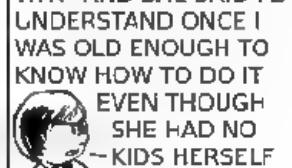


ONLY TWO NEW RULES IN SIX WEEKS? HE MUST HAVE HAD AN OFF MONTH AND A HALF

IF YOU MEAN "SEX," MY COUSIN SAID IT SHOULD ONLY BE CALLED "MAKING YOLKS," AND IT'S ONLY FOR MAKING THE CHICKEN NEW SERVANTS.



SHE'D FLIP OUT IF SHE HEARD IT CALLED "MAKING LOVE," BECAUSE SHE SAID NO ONE SHOULD EVER LOVE ANYONE BUT THE CHICKEN GOD. I ASKED WHY, AND SHE SAID I'D UNDERSTAND ONCE I WAS OLD ENOUGH TO KNOW HOW TO DO IT EVEN THOUGH SHE HAD NO KIDS HERSELF



WHAT WERE OUR PARENTS THINKING, LEAVING YOU WITH HER? I HOPE YOU DON'T HATE ME FOR ABANDONING YOU!



YIKES. THE CLOSEST I GOT TO THAT WAS MOM'S BIG LECTURE ON COMIC BOOKS. THE ONE WITH AMAZON GIRL AND THE HYPER-PHASE DISTORTION BLASTER WAS MUCH TOO VIOLENT, AND THE ONE WITH RAINBOW RAI

DER VERSUS BATMAN HAD THE VILLAIN WIN SAYING "I BELIEVE IN ME!"

WHICH SHE SAID WAS "UNGODLY."

AND THEN DAD JUMPED IN ABOUT HOW RAINBOW RAIDER'S BEING A WINNER MIGHT ENCOURAGE ME TO MATE WITH THE WRONG SORT OF PEOPLE. HAVE NO IDEA WHAT HE MEANT, OR WHAT IT HAD TO DO WITH THAT RAINBOWS ARE JUST COOL!



HE SAID I NEEDED TO "LISTEN TO FACTS" "LISTEN TO PHAX?" SO HE'S STARTED REFERRING TO HIMSELF IN THE THIRD PERSON AGAIN?



"ARPHAXAD" IS MY BROTHER'S NAME. HE NEVER TOLD YOU THAT? I'M SURPRISED, GIVEN HIS HUGE EGO. DOES HE THINK IT'S SACRED, OR SOMETHING?

HE DID SAY THAT I SHOULD NEVER REFER TO THROWING UP AS "ARFING," OR CALL YOU MAXIMILIAN, SINCE IT SOUNDS LIKE "MAX, A MILLION"

HE IS STILL HUNG UP ON NEVER HEARING MAX'S CHILDHOOD NICKNAME, WHILE HE WEAPONIZES HIS OWN. A PURPLE HUMAN.



MY BROTHER'S ALWAYS BEEN ARROGANT AND WILLING TO LATCH ONTO WHOEVER HE THINKS WILL PUT HIM IN A POSITION OF POWER.



DAD'S COLLEGE YEARBOOK SHOWED ME THAT IS THIS YOU WITH THE "I THOUGHT I WAS WRONG ONCE, BUT I WAS MIS-TAKEN" T-SHIRT?



CALVIN'S BEING HIS ONLY CHILD IS WHY HE THREW CALVIN IN THE DUNGEON. AS A HIGH RANKING FOLLOWER OF THE CHICKEN, HIS OFFSPRING REFLECT ON HIM. AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT I'VE PICKED UP FROM OTHER PRISONERS. DURING MY STAY CALVIN GETS A CHANCE TO COMPLY INSTEAD OF STRAIGHTFORWARD DEATH

MOM AND DAD TRIED TO HAVE ANOTHER BABY, BUT MOM SAID SOMETHING WENT WRONG AND THEY COULDN'T HAVE ANY MORE AFTER ME. MAYBE IT WOULD HAVE CHANGED THINGS IF THEY COULD?

NOT FOR THE BETTER. THEY'D GET A DAD JR. AND

SARANNA VISION: 97% LIKELY ALTERNATE TIMELINE.

I PRAISE THE LUMBERCHICKEN, DAD!



NEW BABY BROTHER "MELVILLE"

AND THEN, WITH ME DEAD AND "MELVILLE" A GOOD STOOGE, THE LUMBERCHICKEN WOULD RULE UNOPPOSED?

NOT FOR THAT LONG "MELVILLE" WOULD HAVE HIS FATHER'S EGO, AND THEY'D SOON FIGHT OVER WHO GOT TO BE IN CHARGE TO THE DEATH



AND THE CHICKEN ISN'T UNOPPOSED, EVEN WITH OUT YOU TWO IN THE LIVING WORLD LIBERTY TOWNS ALL HAVE FREE DOM OF RELIGION, EXCEPT FOR "POLITICALLY DANGEROUS" RELIGIONS.

THEY'RE BANNED.



WHAT ARE THOSE?

ANY RELIGION THAT'S PRIMARILY FOCUSED ON SEIZING POLITICAL POWER IN THE LIVING WORLD. THE BEST KNOWN IS, OF COURSE, CHICKENISM, BUT SMALL POCKETS OF OTHER ONES ARE ALL OVER THE PLACE



LIKE WHAT?

MAX. SOME FOLLOWERS OF THE OLD SO-CALLED MONKS SWEAR THAT THE LUMBERCHICKEN DIDN'T ACTUALLY TURN THEIR GODS INTO POOP AND STILL WORSHIP THEM. EVEN AFTER MAKING A PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY SEPTIC TANK DURING DECIDE DAY AND SEEING THE POOP FOR THEMSELVES CALVIN DO SOME OF THEM START WORSHIPPING THE POOP INSTEAD?

MAX. SOME PEOPLE WORSHIP ANYTHING I RAN INTO ONE GUY WHO WORSHIPPED THE DYSLEXIC VAMPIRE GHOST "NOSRETTAW" AS THE ORIGINAL CREATOR OF THE AFTERLIFE PLANES. AND WOULD SCRAWL HIS NAME ALL OVER

THERE ARE GHOST VAMPIRES? I THOUGHT THEY WERE UNDEAD ALREADY AND COULDN'T BE GHOSTS!

I'VE LEARNED A LOT ABOUT GHOSTS SINCE I BECAME ONE



GHOSHTOOD IS JUST A STATE OF BEING DEAD AND NON PHYSICAL. THE PHYSICAL DEAD CAN BECOME NON PHYSICAL WITH THE RIGHT METHODS. AND WHAT CAN BE DEAD IS FLEXIBLE, TOO.

HOW FLEXIBLE?



FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO COUNT AS ANIMISM, WHICH THE CHICKEN CALLS HERESY. REMEMBER THE BOOK-BURNING ERA THAT INTENSIFIED WHEN THE CHICKEN TOOK OVER?

WHO WOULDN'T? ESPECIALLY SINCE I READ A LOT MORE AFTER I STARTED FIGHTING H.M.



YOU HAVE

CHANGED!

THE BURNED BOOKS TURNED INTO GHOSTS, AND THEY'RE AVAILABLE IN CERTAIN LIBRARIES ON THIS SIDE, IF YOU KNOW WHERE TO LOOK

AND CAN STAY ON TIFFANY'S GOOD SIDE



I KNOW ABOUT ANIMISM. I HAD SOME BAD EXPERIENCES TRYING TO RIDE A BIKE THAT DIDN'T WANT TO BE RIDDEN. DOES IT APPLY TO EVERYTHING?

YES. SOME THINGS KNOW WHAT THEY'RE GETTING INTO. YOU DON'T HAVE TO APOLOGIZE TO EVERYTHING. JUST BE MORE CAREFUL.

INFORMATION IS NOT LOST. MY PEOPLE ARE SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE MULTIVERSE SINCE THE CHICKEN IS MY HOME REALITY BY CONSUMING ITS SPIRITUAL ENERGY FOR HIS ASCENSION.



BRIAN, SOMETIMES GOT A TRANSMISSION FROM ONE OF THEM OR FOUND GRAFFITI WRITTEN IN MY LANGUAGE CARVED INTO WRECKAGE BEFORE I CAME HERE

4565993709434879170-1485587124276568358-28430202462460483687. PREPOSTEROUS. I NEITHER LOOK NOR SMELL LIKE A



SARANNA. SO THE CHICKEN GOD HAS DONE EVEN WORSE THAN I THOUGHT. CALVIN, ALTHOUGH FINDING TRACES OF THEM MEANS THAT THEY'RE NOT GONE, BUT HE'LL HAVE TO APOLOGIZE TO AN ENTIRE REALITY'S WORTH OF STUFF. AND I'LL ONLY HAVE TO APOLOGIZE TO A SHIRT FOR WHAT I DID TO IT ONE TIME



I GUESS THE GHOST LIBRARIES HOLD SECRETS THAT COULD TAKE THE LUMBERCHICKEN DOWN, SINCE HE WOULDN'T BURN BOOKS UNLESS THEY THREATENED HIM SOMEHOW?

DEFINITELY



BUT HE WOULD SOMETIMES BURN BOOKS BECAUSE HE COULD, AND THEN CLAIM THAT HE WAS THE REAL DISCOVERER OF WHAT WAS IN THEM, IN ORDER TO REWRITE HISTORY IN HIS FAVOR

WE'VE SEEN THAT



HOW COULD YOU HAVE SEEN THAT? UNLESS YOU WENT TO THE GHOST LIBRARY WHEN MAX TALKED TO YOU LAST TIME?

NO SUCH LUCK. BUT THE CHICKEN DOESN'T PAY AS MUCH ATTENTION AS HE SHOULD

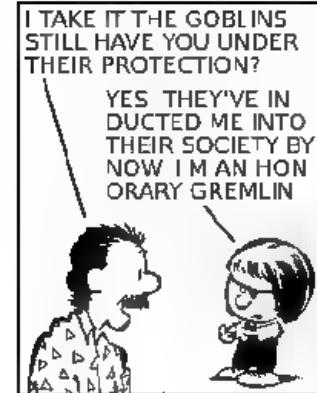


HE MOSTLY WATCHES AND LISTENS DURING MEALTIMES IN THE DUNGEON. OTHER TIMES, LIKE DEMORALIZING HOURS, HE ONLY DOES IF HE FEELS LIKE IT, BECAUSE HE THINKS THAT WE'RE SECURE AND HE CAN LET HIS GUARD DOWN. LUCKY FOR US AND THE GOBLINS. THE DUNGEON LIBRARY HAS A FEW OLD BOOKS HE MISSED...



I TAKE IT THE GOBLINS STILL HAVE YOU UNDER THEIR PROTECTION?

YES. THEY'VE INDUCTED ME INTO THEIR SOCIETY BY NOW. I'M AN HONORARY GREMLIN



THERE ARE DUNGEON GREMLINS AS WELL AS GOBLINS?

"GREMLIN" IS A TITLE FOR A GOBLIN WITH MORE APTITUDE FOR TECHNOLOGY THAN MAGIC. I WASN'T BORN A GOBLIN, SO THEIR NATURAL MAGIC IS BEYOND ME

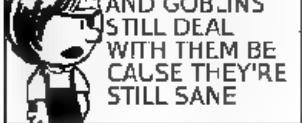


YOUR SPIRITUAL VISION DOESN'T QUALIFY YOU AS POWERFUL AS IT IS?

NO, BUT THAT KIND OF MAGIC IS BEYOND THEM. THEY CAN MAKE DEALS WITH OTHER POWERS IF THEY WISH, BUT THEY USUALLY GET WARPED, UNLIKE NON FEY



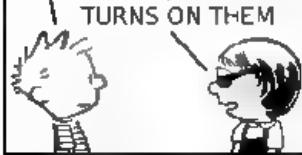
THOSE WHO MAKE SUCH DEALS ARE WARLOCKS, AND THEY MOSTLY END UP TWISTED INTO ELDritch HORRORS. BUT SOME END UP TWISTED INTO DIFFERENT SPECIES. INSTEAD, ONE CLAN THAT MADE A DEAL FOR GREAT STRENGTH BECAME ORCS, AND GOBLINS. THEY STILL DEAL WITH THEM BECAUSE THEY'RE STILL SANE



THE ORCS ARE DIFFERENT ENOUGH FROM THE GOBLINS THAT THE CHICKEN GOD'S MAGICAL YOKE ON THE GOBLINS HAS NO HOLD ON THEM. SO MOST OF THE ORCS GOT AWAY FROM HIM, EXCEPT FOR THE OCCASIONAL STRAGGLER CAUGHT BY HIS NON HUMAN RAIDER SQUADS.



THE RAIDERS ARE NON HUMAN, OR THEY RAID FOR NON HUMANS?



WHY IS A CHICKEN SO OBSESSED WITH HUMANITY? SHOULDN'T HIS BUTT SERVANTS BE B RD-LIKE CLOACA-SERVANTS?



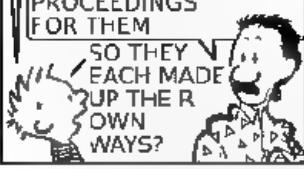
SO THAT'S HOW "BOB" THE ALIEN AND OTHERS LIKE THEM GOT IN THE DUNGEON BUT GETTING TO OTHER DIMENSIONS AND STUFF IS HARD, GIVEN WHAT WE HAD TO DO TO GET HERE.



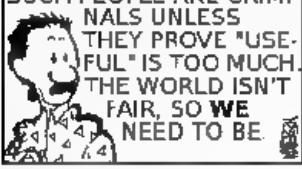
SOUNDS COOL TO ME. BUT DAD WOULD GO OFF SOMETIMES ABOUT HOW PEOPLE FROM OTHER REALITIES WERE RUINING THIS ONE BY COMING HERE ILLEGALLY

EACH LIBERTY TOWN SET UP ITS OWN LEGAL PROCEEDINGS FOR THEM

SO THEY EACH MADE UP THEIR OWN WAYS?



PRETTY MUCH WHAT WAS LEGAL DEPENDED ENTIRELY ON WHO WAS ENFORCING THINGS, WHICH VARIED A LOT. KEEPING EXTRADIMENSIONAL CRIMINALS OUT IS ONE THING, BUT MAKING LAWS SAYING ALL SUCH PEOPLE ARE CRIMINALS UNLESS THEY PROVE "USEFUL" IS TOO MUCH. THE WORLD ISN'T FAIR, SO WE NEED TO BE.



EVEN WITH GODS WHO COULD INTERVENE? I'VE WORKED WITH SEVERAL WHO COULD, BESIDES ERIS.

WHEN AND HOW THEY INTERVENE VARIES A LOT. TOO. NOT COUNTING HOW THEY FIGHT AND TEAR DOWN EACH OTHER'S WORK SOME TIMES.



A LOT OF LEGAL STUFF SOUNDS LIKE IT'S EITHER MEAN OR IT'S ARBITRARY AS FOR THE GODS, I GUESS I'VE BEEN LUCKY.

JUST DON'T FALL IN THE TRAP OF "THEY'RE UNWORTHY OF MY TIME UNLESS THEY DO WHAT I WANT" THAT'S BAD ENOUGH WHEN APPLIED TO PEOPLE.



THE LUMBERCHICKEN'S FROM ANOTHER REALITY, AND THERE'S NO MENTION OF HIS SIGNING THE LEGAL PAPERWORK TO BE HERE THAT I CAN FIND, NOT IN THE ROOSTER TESTAMENT, ANY OF THE CHICK TRACTS, OR THE POJLTRY VUH. NOPE. NOT HERE IN THIS REALITY, MUCH LESS IN AMERICA.



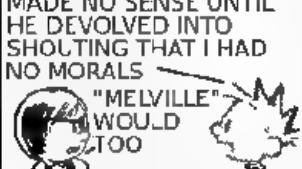
THE SAME APPLIES TO THE OLD TRINITY, ODDLY ENOUGH. BUT DON'T TELL ANYONE WHO THINKS LIKE MY BROTHER THAT

I POINTED IT OUT ONCE WHILE HE WAS RANTING ABOUT DIMENSIONAL INVADERS. UH OH.



HE GOT AS ANGRY AS I'VE EVER SEEN HIM, ONLY THE SECOND TIME HE'S DONE THAT. HIS VOICE WENT UP AN OCTAVE, HE SAID "IT'S NOT THE SAME THING!", AND WENT OFF ON SOME EXPLANATION THAT MADE NO SENSE UNTIL HE DEVOLVED INTO SHOUTING THAT I HAD NO MORALS.

"MELVILLE" I WOULD TOO.



CALVIN AND THEN HE WRAPPED UP BY SAYING THAT HE WAS ENTIRELY INDEPENDENT, HE THOUGHT FOR HIMSELF, AND HE WORSHIPPED THE OLD TRINITY BECAUSE IT WAS WHAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF AMERICANS BELIEVED IN.

SARANNA, UNTIL THE CHICKEN TOOK OVER AND HE CHANGED SIDES, RIGHT? AND HE HAS NO WAY OF KNOWING WHAT ANYONE BELIEVES.

MAX, SO MY BROTHER THE MAVERICK EXPRESSES HIS INDIVIDUALITY THROUGH CONFORMITY IN RELIGIOUS BELIEFS? THAT'S TYPICAL OF HIM. WAIT, THE SECOND TIME? WHAT WAS THE FIRST?

THERE WAS A TV COMMERCIAL WHICH SHOWED JESUS AS A LUMBERJACK, GOING OUT AT SUNRISE TO CUT DOWN DEAD WOOD. "KEEP FAITH, OR HE'LL CUT YOU DOWN."



I REMEMBER THAT IT'S SUPREME RONY THAT A MEMBER OF THE OLD TRINITY WOULD SHOW UP AS A LUMBERJACK.

SOME KIDS AT SCHOOL WERE TALKING ABOUT IT, AND ONE SAID, "BY JESUS' MORNING WOOD!"



THOUGHT IT WAS ANOTHER WAY TO REFER TO A LUMBERJACK'S LOAD, UNTIL I MENTIONED IT AROUND DAD. HE WRAPPED UP THAT EXPLOSION WITH A LECTURE ON THE PENALTY FOR BLASPHEMY.



AND SOMETHING ABOUT COMMANDMENT 11, AND HOW HE SWORE JESUS DIDN'T HAVE ANY ANATOMY WORTH BEING ASHAMED OF, WHATEVER THAT MEANT. GODS



I STILL DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHAT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT, BUT SINCE THE CHICKEN FUSED JESUS WITH THE REST OF THE OLD TRINITY AND TURNED THEM INTO THE BUTT VICEROY, I GUESS ONLY THE CHICKEN KNOWS WHERE JESUS' MORNING WOOD IS NOW?



UH, RIGHT. HE HAS ENTIRELY DIFFERENT ANATOMY NOW. AND MY BROTHER STILL REACTS TO BEING CONTRADICTED THE WAY HE ALWAYS HAS.

IF I HAD A NICKEL FOR EVERY TIME HE SAID I HAD NO MORALS, NO, ENOUGH ABOUT HIM.



IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE GETTING TO THE GOOD PART, AND I HATE TO INTERRUPT, BUT IS THERE ANY WAY TO GET SOME FOOD HERE BEFORE YOU CONTINUE? IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE CALVIN AND I ATE, AND I'M AT LEAST HUNGRY FOR SOMETHING THAT'S NOT WAFFLES OR SOUP.



THIS STORY HAS TAKEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT? BUT THE CELESTIAL BUREAU CRACKED D LET YOU IN, AND, AS MORTALS, YOU CAN EAT THE SAME FOOD AS ONI. SOME OF THEIR RESTAURANTS TAKE PRIDE IN BREAKING THE CHICKEN'S FOOD COMMANDMENTS. TOO. WE CAN TELL THE REST OF THE STORY THERE.





YOU'RE THINKING FLYING MAGIC CARPETS THE ONES I'M TALKING ABOUT ARE WISHING CARPETS THAT TELEPORT YOU INSTANTLY. THEY'RE MORE COMMON IN BIGGER REGIONS LIKE THE HEAVENS AND HELL'S. EVERYONE HERE KNOWS ABOUT THEM AFTER THE STORMFIELD INCIDENT AWHILE BACK, WHEN HE USED ONE OF THEM TO GET HOME.

MOVEMENT IS CRAZY HERE. I SWEAR THAT BACKWARDS "NOSRETTAW" GRAFFITI DISAPPEARED JUST BEFORE WE STARTED WALKING, BUT NOW IT'S BACK!

WHAT'S THAT? A CAPTAIN STORM FIELD WENT OFF COURSE TRYING TO GET TO HIS RIGHTFUL HEAVEN. HE ENDED UP AT A HEAVEN FOR SKY BLUE, ONE LEGGED, SEVEN HEADED PEOPLE WHO THOUGHT EARTH WAS CALLED "THE WART".

AND, IN CASE YOU'RE WONDERING, NOT ALL HELLS RUN ON ETERNAL PUNISHMENT. ONLY THE UNJUST ONES RUN BY GODS LIKE THE LUMBER CHICKEN AND THE BUTT CEROUY (THOSE TWO DESERVE EACH OTHER). THE JUST ONES HAVE FINITE PUNISHMENTS FOR FINITE CRIMES, AND MERCY WHEN IT APPLIES. IT WAS A RELIEF TO FIND THAT OUT.

BUT IF YOU WANT TO EAT ANYTIME SOON, WE REALLY SHOULD STOP TALKING AND START WALKING

YES, LET'S GO!

WE FINALLY REACHED A MASSIVE FLOATING CHUNK OF GROUND WITH A ROW OF BUILDINGS ON IT. SJSIE HANDED SARANNA AND ME OUR VOUCHERS, AND I LOOKED AT MINE CLOSELY.

YOU GHOSTS FLOATING UP AND DOWN I CAN DEAL WITH, EVEN IF IT LOOKS LIKE YOU GROW AND SHRINK IN PLACE SOMETIMES. WOULD IT BE EASIER IF I WERE A GHOST, TOO?

MAYBE I'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE, AND I'M NOT ALL THAT USED TO IT. MAYBE IF WE HAD MINI STAB LIZZER JETS LIKE THE ONES BRIAN SPROUTED ON LIFTOFF

I SEE THE SIGNS. THE NEAREST ONE IS FOR A PIZZERIA CLAIMING TO BREAK ALL COMMANDMENTS IN THE 40700S. I FIND IT INTERESTING THAT THERE ARE EXACTLY ONE HUNDRED COMMANDMENTS THAT HAVE TO DO WITH PIZZA.

WHAT'S THIS? "BREAKING COMMANDMENT 56943" WILL RESULT IN THE CLIENT'S BEING BANNED."

I'VE NEVER HEARD OF THAT ONE! IT'S OBSCURE "THOU SHALT NOT TRAFFIC IN LAPIS LAZULI FROM DEMONIC MUSQUASH PEOPLE."

WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?

MAX SHORT VERSION CELESTIALS AND DEMONS HAVE BEEN AT WAR FOR AGES. CELESTIALS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ASCEND TO GODHOOD MORE, SO THEY HAVE BETTER P.R. AND TEND TO PAINT DEMONS AS EVIL. BUT IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE. SARANNA, THE CHICKEN IS AN ASCENDED CELESTIAL AND HE'S NOT GOOD. MAX, RIGHT THERE ARE OTHER CELESTIALS AND DEMONS, IN A VARIETY OF FORMS AND SOME ARE IN MORE HUMANIZED FORMS, FROM CELESTIAL IBEX-PeOPLE TO DEMONIC MUSQUASH PEOPLE. CALVIN, GOAT-PeOPLE AND RODENT-PeOPLE? WOW, I WONDER HOW MANY OTHERS THERE ARE!

LOTS SO ONE LEADER OF THE MUSQUASH PEOPLE TRIED BYING HIS WAY TO GODHOOD WITH LAPIS LAZULI HE'D GOTTFEN FROM A MINE HE OWNED. BUT IT WAS ALL GLAMOURED BLUE COPROLITES FROM DEMONIC DEER PEOPLE HE'D ENSLAVED AND WORKED TO DEATH. IT WAS SUCH A SCANDAL THAT THE WOULD-BE GOD'S NAME WAS ERASED FROM ALL RECORDS, AND IT BLEW BACK ON HIS SPECIES

SO TRYING TO PAY FOR FOOD BY PASSING FOSSILIZED POOP OFF AS GEM STONES WILL GET YOU BANNED FROM ONI RESTAURANTS? THAT IS OBSCURE BUT ONLY FRESH DEER POOP IS BLUE, FROM FROM WHEN THEY EAT A LOT OF BERRIES!

OF COURSE YOU'D KNOW ABOUT GROSS THINGS LIKE POOP FOSSILS AND COLORS!

YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED THAT MUCH!

I WAS CURIOUS, TOO. THE FOSSILS ABSORBED BLUE AGATE, WHICH MADE THEM BLUE AGAIN, SO THE GLAMOUR DIDN'T HAVE TO DO AS MUCH WORK. THE MUSQUASH LEADER MADE BLUE HIS OFFICIAL COLOR, AND HIS FOLLOWERS ALL HAD TO WEAR BLUE GINGHAM OUTFITS AND ARMY BOOTS, AND WERE BARRED FROM DANCING THE JITTERBUG

OH, THOSE MUSQUASHES! THE ONE INSULT MY COUSIN WOULD LET ME USE WAS CALLING SOMEONE A "BLUE GINGHAM MUSQUASH." SINCE PRETENDING TO BE RICH TO GET POWER WAS ONE OF THE WORST THINGS YOU COULD DO! IT'S THE ONE THING THE CHICKEN WOULD NEVER FORGIVE. NOT THAT HE EVER FORGIVES MUCH, EXCEPT IN RARE CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT STILL!



WELCOME TO
MCZARGALD'S.
MAY I TAKE
YOUR OR
DER?

AFTER WE
DECIDED
WHAT WE
WANTED
TO EAT

WE NON LIVING AREN'T HAVING ANYTHING I'M THE CHAPERONE, AND WE'RE ALL FAMILY TWO VOUCHERS HERE THEY WILL HAVE A HAMBURGER WITH MAYONNAISE AND EXTRA PICKLES, AND A CHEESEBURGER WITH SWISS CHEESE AND KET CHUP. AND NO SPECIAL MEAT, IF YOU WOULD THANKS TWO CHOCOLATE MILKS, AS WELL.

THE MENU SAYS THE TONKOTSU BURGERS ARE MADE WITH PORK, AND THE SABAMISO ONES ARE MADE WITH MACKEREL. WHAT'S SPECIAL MEAT? IS IT HAMBURGER MEAT MADE OUT OF PEOPLE FROM HAMBURG?

CLOSE IT'S MADE OUT OF HUMAN CRIMINALS, AN ONI DELI CACY.

WE'RE NOT CRIMINALS, RIGHT? EVEN THOUGH I'M BREAKING COMMANDMENT 73, AND SARANNA'S BREAKING COMMANDMENT 97 BY EATING A CHEESEBURGER WITH SWISS CHEESE?

NO THE CHICKEN'S FOOD CRIMES DON'T COUNT FOR THAT

TECHNICALLY YOU ARE ALSO BREAKING COMMANDMENT 72 DUE TO EATING A HAMBURGER WITH EXTRA MAYONNAISE AT ALL. BUT MANY COMMANDMENTS HAVE REDUNDANCY. I ALSO DISLIKE BEING CALLED NON-LIVING, JUST BECAUSE THIS DIMENSION ASSUMES ALL LIFE IS BIOLOGICAL. HAS THE TRANSMISSION MADE ANY PROGRESS THERE?



SOMEONE SET UP A HOT LINE THAT PEOPLE COULD USE TO ANONYMOUSLY TURN OTHER PEOPLE IN FOR PRACTICING "POLITICALLY DANGEROUS RELIGIONS" NOT THAT THE TOWN DIDN'T HAVE ITS SHARE OF THAT EVEN THOUGH CHICKENISM WAS EVERYWHERE OUTSIDE THE TOWN, SOME INSISTED ON TRYING TO BRING IT INSIDE, EVEN THOUGH THE CHICKEN FORBIDDEN IT AS A FAITH TEST

THERE WERE RUMORS THAT THE HOTLINE HAD BEEN STARTED BY AN OUTSIDER WHO'D BEEN TARGETED TOO MANY TIMES AND FIGURED THEY COULD USE THE TOWNIES' CRAB BUCKET CULTURE AGAINST THEM. NO ONE COULD PROVE IT, BUT IT SERVED AS A WARNING FROM THEN ON AND KEPT THEM IN LINE. LUCKY FOR ME AND OTHERS LIKE ME, BUT I THINK IT WAS MORE THAN LUCK.

WHAT KIND OF WAR?

WITH CELESTIAL BIRD-PEOPLE THE SAME ONES WHO, AFTER EXILING THEM, ACHIEVED ULTIMATE POWER OVER EARTH'S SOLAR SYSTEM BY DRAINING LIFE FORCE FROM THE REST OF THEIR SPECIES, PLUS EXTRA POWER FROM ANY SOURCE THEY CONSIDERED EXPENDABLE.

NOT YET BUT DON'T WORRY BRIAN. IT'S MOVING THROUGH THE BUREAUCRACY, AND IF WE HAVE TO TAKE IT ALL THE WAY TO THE PLEFROMA COUNCIL AT THE TOP TO GET IT DONE WE WILL!

SO SOME PEOPLE STILL FIND WAYS TO PUT EACH OTHER DOWN, EVEN HERE

UNFORTUNATELY BUT WE KEEP ON TRYING TO IMPROVE IT'S ALL WE CAN DO

THERE WAS LESS OF THAT IN THE NEW LIBERTY TOWN I WAS IN. IT TURNED OUT THAT THE TOWNIES WHO'D BACKSTAB YOU AND EACH OTHER WHILE HIDING BEHIND A FAKE NICE ACT USED TO DOMINATE, JUST LIKE IN THE OLD TOWN, BUT THEY GOT EFFECTIVELY WIPE OUT

HOW DID THAT HAPPEN?

IT WAS REALLY SO COMMON THAT THEY NEEDED A HOTLINE FOR IT? NO, BUT A COMBINATION OF NOT NEEDING EVIDENCE, ONLY ACCUSATION, AND THE TOWNIES' LOVE OF GOSSIPING ALONG WITH BACKSTABBING SEALED THEIR FATES

MOST OF THE TOWNIES GLEEFULLY TURNED IN THEIR OWN NEIGHBORS, SOME OVER ACTUAL OFFENSES, BUT MOST OVER MADE UP OFFENSES TO GET MORE STATUS FOR THEMSELVES, AND THE ENTIRE TOWN ENDED UP IMPRISONED FOR YEARS, IF NOT LIFE EXCEPT FOR A FEW LUCKY ONES, BUT THEY WERE SO FEW THAT THINGS FELL APART

BUT THEY PUT THINGS BACK TOGETHER BY THE TIME YOU GOT THERE?

BY IMPORTING NEW PEOPLE TO REPLACE THE IMPRISONED ONES, WHO WERE EITHER CIVILIZED ENOUGH TO HAVE SOME LOYALTY TO FELLOW PEOPLE OR SMART ENOUGH TO HOLD THEMSELVES BACK FROM GOING AFTER EVERYONE

WHAT MAKES YOU SO CERTAIN THIS TIME? ENOUGH THINGS WORKED OUT THAT I FIGURED IT COULDN'T BE RANDOM. I HAD TO GET TWO JOBS TO SURVIVE, BUT BOTH OF THEM LED ME THE RIGHT WAY IN THE LONG TERM.

MAX THE FIRST WAS PILOTING FASTER THAN LIGHT SPACE CRAFT. THERE WAS A POPULATION OF CELESTIAL DINOSAUR PEOPLE IN TOWN. THEY'D COME THROUGH A LOCAL RIFT, LEAVING BEHIND A MASSIVE SELF-CONTAINED CITY ON A PLANET THAT WAS OTHERWISE LITTLE MORE THAN DESERT. THEY WERE TIGHT-LIPPED ABOUT WHAT LED THEM HERE. MY COWORKER AND TEACHER, KRALTA, SAID THEY'D BEEN EXILED FROM THE CELESTIAL REALMS AND THE INJURIES THEY TOOK FROM THAT MEANT THAT THEY HAD TO DRAIN LIFE ENERGY FROM THE PLANET TO RECOVER ENOUGH TO ADAPT TO TERRESTRIAL REALMS. THE RIFT GAVE THEM NEW OPTIONS

CELESTIAL. WHY DID DINOSAURS NEED PEOPLE IN PLOTS FROM EARTH?

CRAFT? MANY OF THEIR PILOTS DIED BEFORE THEY COULD ADAPT, AND THEY WERE AT WAR, IT TURNED OUT.

I THOUGHT YOU SAID THEY WERE TIGHT-LIPPED ABOUT IT. KRALTA AND I BONDED AFTER A WHILE FOR ONE THING, WE HAD BOTH LOST FAMILY TO THEM, EVEN THOUGH I ONLY HAD TO DEAL WITH THE LUMBER-CHICKEN

MAX HE WAS SURPRISED THAT YALDABAOKW WAS AT THE TOP POSITION ON EARTH. AFTER HOW THE WAR WENT, HE THOUGHT SABAOKW, THE CHAINSAWSHRIKE, WOULD BE THERE INSTEAD OF BEING DEMOTED TO THE ARCHON OF MARS



HOW DOES IT HELP THEM TO COME HERE THEN, SINCE THEIR ENEMY RUNS THIS WORLD?

THE MORE POWER THEY SPEND ON CONTROL, THE LESS THEY HAVE FOR WAR, IT SEEMS



BUT THERE'S THE FOOD NOW WE SHOULD GRAB IT BEFORE I GO ON

I'LL GET THE TRAYS, YOU FIND AN EMPTY TABLE. R.GHT



THE RECEIPT "HELPFULLY" STATES THAT THE ORDER NUMBER IS THE SAME AS THE COMMANDMENT AGAINST EATING CORN-BREAD WITH STRAWBERRY PRESERVES, WHICH IS ONE OF THE DESENTS OFFERED HERE.



MY PEOPLE'S ALSO TEND TO BE. I OCCASIONALLY RECEIVE MESSAGES VIA MY SURVIVORS IN OTHER REALITIES. G-LOGGMQLHNDHH-335699-1401692966795814850-3112593673240522968, WHOM I WILL CALL 'GARY' FOR YOUR SAKE, IS IN AN APPARENTLY EMPTY REGION, AND DISLIKES HIS ISOLATION.



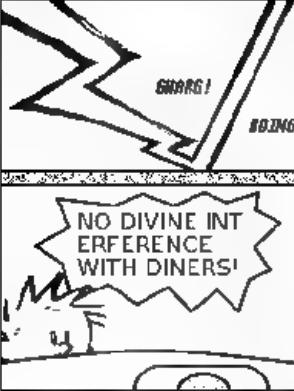
BRIAN HE VERBALLY LASHES OUT WHEN IT BECOMES TOO MUCH

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THAT IS OBSCENE, ANATOMICALLY IMPOSSIBLE, AND OVERLY LIMITED TO UNSIGNED SIXTY-FOUR BIT VALUES.

THANKS IT'S NICE TO BE ABLE TO RELAX WITH SOME COMFORT FOOD

YES, THANKS BUT I CAN FEEL THAT PRESENCE AGAIN



LOOK OUT THE WINDOW! THAT POTTED SPIDER PLANT TOOK THE BOLT INSTEAD AND TURNED INTO A PILE OF ROTINI!



I'VE NEVER SEEN THE BARRIER KICK IN FOR THAT BEFORE! IT MOSTLY BLOCKS THE GRAFFITI FOR "NOSRETTAW," SINCE A LOT OF THAT'S FULLY OR PARTIALLY INSCRIBED VIA NON ONI MAGIC SO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL US AT SOME POINT, CALVIN!



HE TOLD ME SOON AFTER WE MET THE SHORT VERSION IS THAT THE FLYING SPAGHETTI MONSTER IS UNHAPPY WITH HIM

I'VE DEALT WITH A LOT ERIS WORKED OJT BETTER, FOR ONE



GO ON WITH YOUR STORY, AND HE'LL TELL HIS IN DUE TIME. BESIDES, IT WOULD TAKE LONG ENOUGH TO MAKE OUR BURGERS GET LUKEWARM.



AND SHOULDN'T YOU THREE SIT DOWN TOO? OR DOES YOUR NATURAL FLOATING MEAN YOU DON'T HAVE TO? MAX'S LAST VISIT WASN'T LONG ENOUGH TO NEED THAT, BUT THIS ONE MIGHT BE YUM



MAX THE FLOATING MEANS WE DON'T HAVE TO SIT, BUT WE CAN AT LEAST FLOAT OVER CHAIRS

CALVIN: AND WE KNOW WHAT BRIAN LIVES ON NOW, BUT WHAT DO GHOSTS EAT? MAX SPIRITUAL FOOD, BUT IT'S MORE ABOUT THE JOY OF IT THAN THE NEED OF IT

SUSIE: I MAY HAVE TO TRY THE SPIRITUAL VERSION OF YOUR BURGER SOMETIME. SARANNA AFTER WE CATCH UP ON EVERYTHING ELSE.

SARANNA: DO ROBOTS ENJOY EATING ANYTHING, BRIAN?

BRIAN: SOME THINGS, WHEN

CHEMICALLY ANALYZE THEM, CAN BE GOOD. MANY OF THE

BANNED FOODS ARE, SUCH AS

HAM AND PINEAPPLE PIZZAS

I RAN INTO A TOWNSWOMAN ONCE WHO HAD A HAM, PINEAPPLE, JALAPEÑO, MUSHROOM, AND ANCHOVY PIZZA. SHE CALLED IT A SEVENFOLD BECAUSE IT BROKE SEVEN PIZZA COMMANDMENTS, WHICH WAS A RECORD



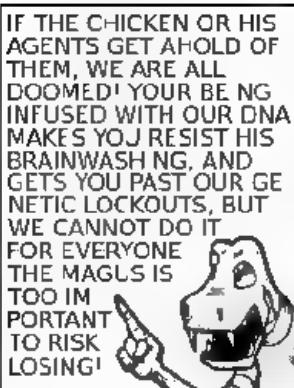
BUT TO GET BACK TO MY STORY, THE CELESTIAL DINOSAUR PEOPLE NEEDED FASTER THAN LIGHT CRAFTS TO GET OUT OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM AND ESCAPE THE R. ENEMIES' WRATH. ENTIRELY EARTH WAS JUST A PIT STOP ON THE WAY



MAX, EVEN SO, THEIR OLD WORLD STILL HAD SOME PEOPLE AND THINGS THAT NEEDED SAVING, SO KRALTA AND I TOOK A FEW FLIGHTS THERE AND BACK



ARE YOU SURE YES, MAX. WE CAN GET STEALTH THROUGH THE MODE IS RIFT THIS WAY? ON



NOT TO MENTION HIS REMAINING FAMILY! WHEN HE VISITED EARTH LAST TIME IN AN ILLUSORY HUMAN FORM WHEN THE OLD TRINITY WAS YOUNG, THEY CAPTURED HIS MATE WHOM WE HAVE YET TO FIND!





MAX, YOU'LL LEARN IT EVEN
THAT OUR DISAPPOINTMENTS
ARE HARDER TO TAKE WHEN WE
DON'T KNOW ANY CURSES BAD
ENOUGH FOR THEM

SPEAKING OF MATES,
HOW IS YOURS DOING?
SK RRA IS RE-
COVERING NICELY



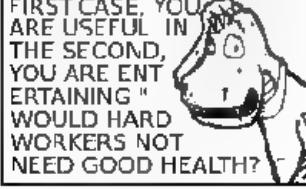
YOUR SECOND JOB AS A
CAREGIVER AND NON-DE-
NOM NATIONAL COUNSELOR
MEANS YOU DEAL
WITH HEALTH CARE
SOMETIMES, YES? WHY IS
YOURS SO MUCH WORSE
THAN OURS, EVEN IN A
LIBERTY TOWN OUTSIDE
YALDABAAWK'S
CONTROL?



I ONLY DEAL WITH IT
WHEN TRYING TO SUPPORT
MY CLIENTS. IT'S
FOR MORALE, NOTHING
MORE BUT THE ENTIRE
HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IS
CONTROLLED AT THE TOP
BY HIS FOUR HEALERS,
LIBERTY TOWN OR NOT



THE RELIGION OF JE-
SUS AND THE OTHER
TWO COMMANDED PEOP-
LE TO WORK FOR A LIV-
ING, WHETHER IT WAS
NECESSARY OR NOT. YAL-
DABAAWK EXTENDED IT
TO "WORK OR DIE" IN THE
FIRST CASE. YOU
ARE USEFUL IN
THE SECOND,
YOU ARE ENT-
ERTAINING
WOULD HARD
WORKERS NOT
NEED GOOD HEALTH?

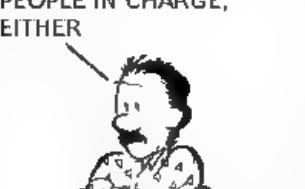


THEY DO, BUT
THE PEOPLE IN
CHARGE DON'T
THINK STRAIGHT
AND ACT AS
THOUGH THEY
HAVE AN INFINITE
SUPPLY OF WORK-
ERS TO USE UP



UNTIL
THEY
LEARN
OTHER-
WISE,
THE
HAVE AN INFINITE HARD
SUPPLY OF WORK-
ERS TO USE UP

THERE ARE EXCEPTIONS
PEOPLE CAN GO ON DISABILITY,
BUT IT'S A CRAP-
SHOOT WHETHER THEY
ACTUALLY GET IT. THE
NEED FOR IT DOESN'T
MATTER MUCH TO THE
PEOPLE IN CHARGE,
EITHER



DOES GETTING IT RELY
ON WHETHER YALDABA-
AWK'S POOP STICKS TO
THE WALL WHEN HE
LAUNCHES IT, OR DID
YOU MEAN "CRAPSHOOT"
IN THE GENERAL SENSE?



THOSE DEFECTORS FROM
THE CELESTIAL BIRD PEOP-
LE SURE TOLD YOU A
LOT. IT'S A SHAME THAT
THEY'RE ALL DEAD NOW.
TALK OF HEALTH CARE
ALSO WORRIES ME. I NE-
VER GOT SICK ENOUGH
TO NEED IT MUCH, BUT A
CLIENT OF
MINE'S
MATE DID,
AND IT'S
BAD.



YOU KNEW YOUR
HEALTH CARE SYS-
TEM WAS BAD GO-
ING IN, YES?

I DID, BUT I THOUGHT
SOME OF THE AC-
COUNTS OF IT HAD TO
BE EXAGGERATED!



I CAN'T GIVE NAMES BUT
MY CLIENT'S LUCKY
ENOUGH TO COUNT AS
DISABLED HIS MATE, ON
THE OTHER HAND,
SHOULD COUNT, BUT
EVERYONE THEY CAN GET
TO REFUSES TO DO THE
TESTING, AND SHE JUST
KEEPS FALLING THROUGH
THE CRACKS



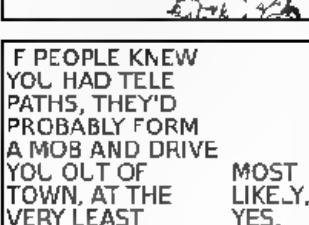
IS THIS NOT LIKE
YOUR FOOD QUEST
IN THE LAST LIBER-
TY TOWN? THEY
CAN PAY, BUT NO
ONE HAS TO DO
WHAT THEY'RE PAID
TO DO, SOMEHOW?



A LOT OF PEOPLE
LIVING IN THEIR
PART OF TOWN
SINCE THE INCI-
DENT HAVE
COME DOWN
WITH
ARJENFLORB
SYNDROME



YES, THAT ONE. THE ORCS
GOT IT FIRST, FOLLOWED
BY THE HUMAN ORC HY-
BRIDS, FOLLOWED BY
OTHER HUMANS. THE
COMMON KNOWLEDGE IS
THAT IT'S AN ORC AND LO-
WER CLASS HUMAN DIS-
EASE, BUT IT CROPS UP
MORE IN THEM BECAUSE
OF THEIR BAD LI-
VING CONDI-
TIONS, WHICH
SET IT OFF IN
WAYS I DON'T
UNDERSTAND



A FEW OF OUR TELEPATHS
HAVE PICKED UP ON ANTI-
ORC SENTIMENTS. A PER-
SISTENT BELIEF IS THAT
THE ORCS SECRETLY
SERVE YALDABAAWK,
SINCE THEY ARE DESCEN-
DED FROM DUNGEON
GOBLINS WHO DO OUR
TELEPATHS CAN
SHOW THIS IS
NOT THE CASE
BUT FEW LISTEN
TO US, OTHER THAN
THOSE LIKE
YOU.



TELEPATHY STILL
MAKES ME NER-
VOUS, FOR BOTH
MYSELF AND THE
OTHERS. YOUR
KIND CAN READ
WORRY NOT OUR DNA
IN YOU SHIELDS YOU
FROM IT, FOR
ONE THING



AS FOR OTHERS, IT IS
NOT A DELIBERATE VIOL-
ATION OF PRIVACY. THE
ONES MAKING THEM
SELVES HEARD ARE DO-
ING THE MENTAL EQUIVA-
LENT OF SHOUTING WHILE
THREE FEET AWAY. IT IS
NOT EAVES-
DROPPING TO
HEAR EVERY-
THING THEY
SAY UNDER
SUCH CIRCUM-
STANCES



IF PEOPLE KNEW
YOU HAD TELE-
PATHS, THEY'D
PROBABLY FORM
A MOB AND DRIVE
YOU OUT OF
TOWN, AT THE
VERY LEAST

MOST
LIKELY.
YES.



BUT IT'S TOO USEFUL TO
IGNORE, AS IT HELPS US
SURVIVE. DID YOU KNOW
THAT ONE OF YOUR "HOLY
DOCTORS" GOT NEAR
ONE OF OUR TELEPATHS
ONCE? WE GOT GREAT IN-
SIGHT INTO HOW THEY
INTERPRET THE WORLD
DARE I ASK
HOW?

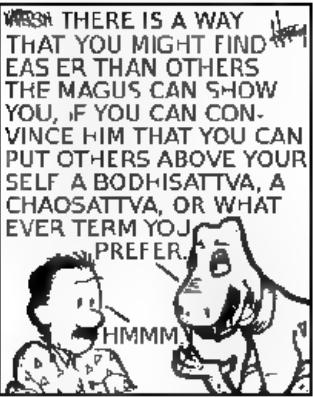
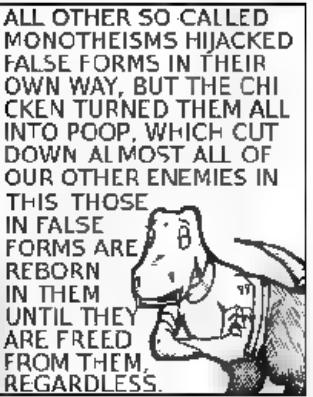
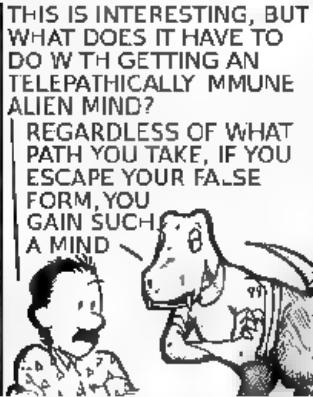
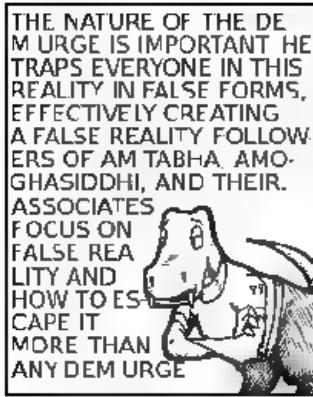
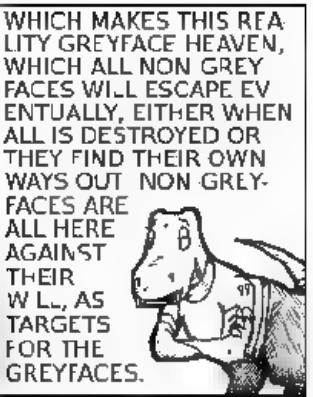
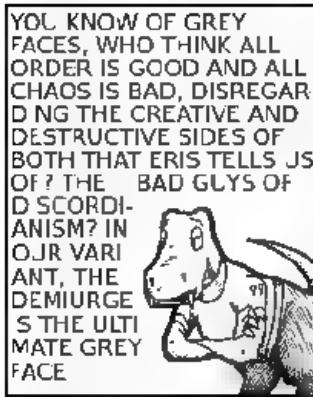
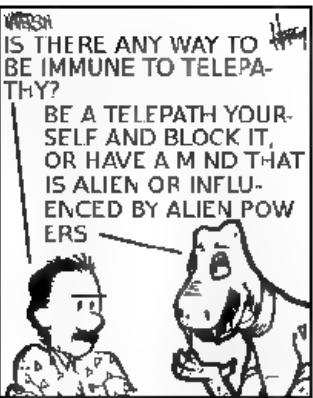
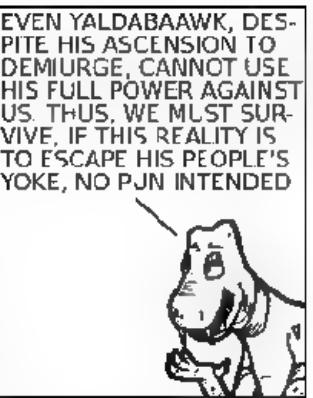
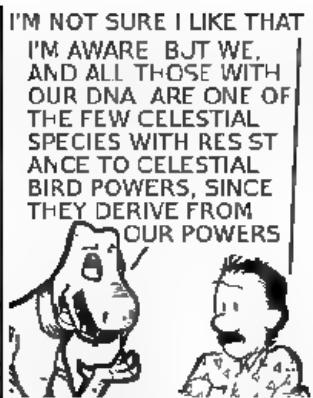


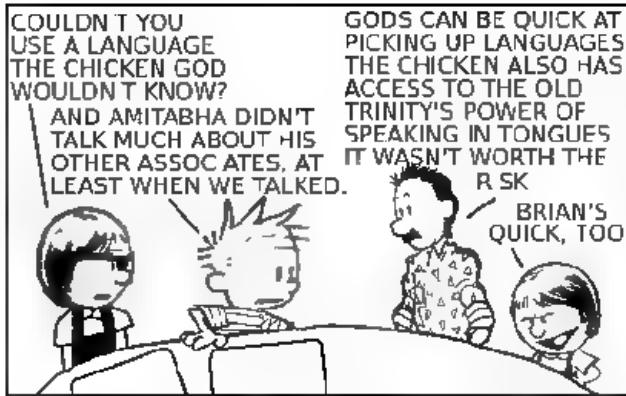
THE THOUGHT WAS "I
AM MERCIFUL! I COULD
REMOVE THOSE UNWOR-
THY OF LIFE BY KILLING
THEM, BUT I STAND BACK
INSTEAD! I COULD SAY
THEY ALL HAVE "SLUG-
GISH SCHIZOPHRENIA,"
BUT I SAW THAT FOR
THE ONES WHO
ARE REALLY OFF
END ME AND
IS THERE EVEN
ONE STA-
TUE OF ME
ON EARTH?"



A HUMAN TURNED
DEMIGOD WANTS A STA-
TUE, AND FOR THAT?
AND HOW CAN YOUR TE-
LEPATHS READ DEMIGODS?

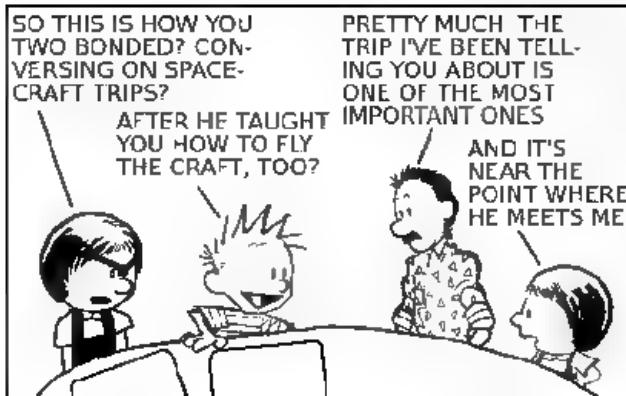






MAX TOLD ME ABOUT ONE OF CALVIN'S TEST ANSWERS. Yakk9 Food hog grng Pubb9 wup zink natoom Gazzork. chumble spuzz IT IS SUCH A SUCCINCT DESCRIPTION OF WHAT YOU CALL NEWTON'S FIRST LAW. AS FOR AMOGHASIDDHI, HE IS GREEN WHERE AMITABHA IS RED, AND FOCUSES MORE ON VANQUISHING EVIL, BUT I DO NOT KNOW MUCH MORE.

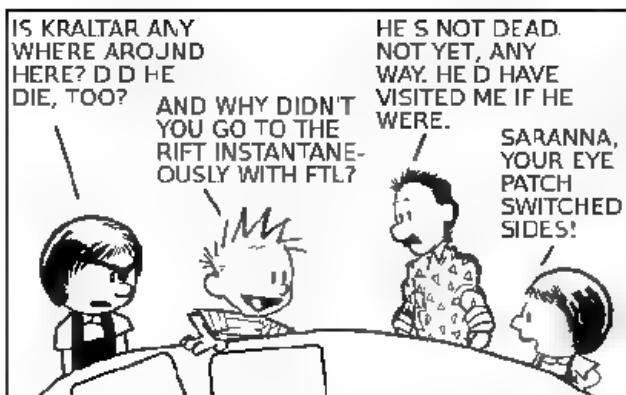
I DESCRIBED IT "IN MY OWN WORDS," AND YOU ONLY NEEDED TEN WORDS TO FIGURE IT OUT? I'M GLAD YOU'RE ON OUR SIDE!



I NOTICE YOU MADE A SLIP OF THE TONGUE, RIGHT WHEN YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT D NO DISCORDIANISM AND TELEPATHY IMMUNITY. GUESS THAT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE TRIP, TOO?

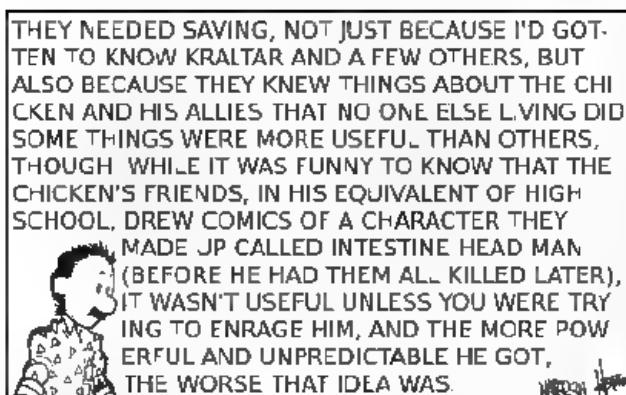
THE WAY IT ENDED, YES BUT I DIDN'T MAKE THAT CONNECTION THEN. I WONDER WHAT THE CELESTIAL DINOSAUR VERSION OF ERIS LOOKS LIKE?

I DON'T KNOW. MAYBE KRAL TAR DOES?



THE GOBLIN MAGIC KEEPING JS HERE WEAKENED FOR A SECOND, WHICH MADE REALITY SHIFT FOR A BIT. IT'S HARMLESS IF GOBLIN MAGIC WERE PERFECT. I HOPE THEY'D HAVE WON THAT IT AGAINST THE CHICKEN HOLDS!

TO ANSWER YOUR OTHER QUESTION, THE RIFT'S ENERGIES IMPEDED THE FTL DRIVE, TOO, SO WE HAD TO DO THE EVACUATION TO EARTH THE SLOW WAY. ONCE THEY ALL WERE ON EARTH, THEY COULD HAVE A PROPER EXODUS.



MAX DID LEARN SOME HANDY TRICKS SOMETIMES, THOUGH. THE EKAFUEL LEVELS ARE GOOD. WHAT WAS THAT AGAIN ABOUT RULES AGAINST BLASPHEMY? IF YOUR GODS ARE OFFENDED BY A FEW LITTLE WORDS, IT'S TIME TO GET NEW GODS. MY MOTHER ALWAYS SAID "YAL-DABAAWK LEARNED THE WRONG LESSONS FROM THE OLD TRINITY IF HE'S EXTENDING ITS RULES FOR THAT."

HE WENT ON TO SAY WHAT THE CHICKEN AND THE OLD TRINITY SHOULD DO TO THEMSELVES. REMAINING PERFECTLY CALM AND NEVER ONCE RAISING HIS VOICE, THE AIR STARTED BLUING AROUND HIM AS HE CONTINUED, AND BY THE TIME HE GOT TO WHAT THE FOUR OF THEM SHOULD SPECIFICALLY DO TO THEIR INTERNAL ORGANS WITH A THAGOMIZER, A DURIAN, AND A SAXOPHONE, MY EARS ACTUALLY STARTED BLEEDING AND A STORM STARDED FORMING. AT THAT POINT, HE STOPPED AND SAID, "SEE? I JUST GAVE THEM MIGRAINES!"



DID ANY OF THE GODS HAVE RULES AGAINST LUST? ONE TIME WHEN I ATE CHINESE FOOD AND READ A FORTUNE FROM A FORTUNE COOKIE, THE CHICKEN GOD WENT OFF EARLY ABOUT COMMANDMENT 1354, "THOU SHALT NOT ADD 'IN BED' TO THE ENDS OF FORTUNES FROM FORTUNE COOKIES TO TURN THEM INTO INNUENDOS" THAT LED TO HER FIRST EXPLOSION ABOUT "MAKING YOLKS."

ACTUALLY YES KRAL TAR THOUGHT THEY DIDN'T MAKE SENSE PAST A CERTAIN POINT, SINCE GODS NEED WORSHIPPERS, THEY USUALLY GET MORE WORSHIPPERS BY BREEDING NEW ONES, AND SOME LUST IS NEEDED TO GET THEIR WORSHIPPERS TO BREED FAST ENOUGH.

WHAT'S AN ORGY, THEN? MY COUSIN SAID IT'S ONE UNLESS YOU'RE BREEDING IN ONE POSITION SHE WOULDN'T DESCRIBE, WITH THE LIGHTS OUT FOR COMMANDMENT 11, AND NOT TAKING JOY IN IT FOR ITS OWN SAKE.



UH T'S BREEDING WHILE TAKING JOY IN IT THE CHICKEN HATES JOY AS YOU KNOW, UNLESS T'S JOY IN HIM ALONE

YEAH, WHAT IS IT?

Y KES! AND HUH

MAX MUTTERED SOMETHING UNDER HIS BREATH THAT SARANNA DIDN'T HEAR, BUT I DID. "PRAISE EBVOOT FOR NOT MAKING ME TRY TO EXPLAIN ORGIES IN KID-FRIENDLY DETAIL." I FOUND OUT LATER THAT EBVOOT WAS A GOD OF SMALL FAVORS THAT MAX HAD WORKED WITH FOR YEARS, AND INTRODUCED KRAL TAR TO

SO BRINGING ENOUGH JOY TO PEOPLE SHOULD HURT THE LUMBERCHICKEN TOO! HOW MUCH WOULD WE NEED?



THERE'S NOT ENOUGH POTENTIAL JOY, OR BLASPHEMY FOR THAT MATTER, TO DEFEAT HIM ENTIRELY ON THEIR OWN. THE PROPHECY SPEAKS OF SEVERAL PEOPLE GOING TO WAR AGAINST HIM, WHILE MASS JOY AND BLASPHEMY BY OTHERS F NISH HIM OFF FOR GOOD



DOES BREAKING THE FOOD COMMANDMENTS HURT HIM TOO, SINCE THERE ARE SO MANY OF THEM?



I KNOW WHAT A THAGO M ZER IS, BUT WHAT'S A DURIAN?

THEY DON'T SEEM TO, SO THEY'RE LIKELY A POWER TRIP ON HIS PART AND MADE UP ON THE FLY. SINCE THEY'RE SO BADLY ORGANIZED, DID YOU KNOW THERE ARE SEPARATE SECTIONS FOR HOT DOGS, CHILI DOGS, AND CORN DOGS? AND HE HAS A COMPLETE BAN ON DOPIAZA CURRY SAUCE, FOR SOME INEXPLICABLE REASON, IN COMMANDMENT 26956

THAT ONE DOESN'T HURT HIM EITHER, UNFORTUNATELY I'VE WATCHED YOU FROM HERE SOME TIMES, AND THINGS LIKE CALLING THE BIG BANG "THE HORRENDOUS SPACE KABLOOIE," OR CALLING A PERIWINKLE A "SORCERER'S VIOLET" DON'T DO ANYTHING TO HIM AT ALL THAT I CAN TELL.

I WISH THOSE RULES DID HURT HIM, SO I COULD HAVE PUT COTTAGE CHEESE ON A CHILI DOG, OR GOCHUJANG ON A CORN DOG, OR DOPAZA CURRY SAUCE ON A VEGETABLE LASAGNA. BUT, ANYWAY, OF COURSE YOU'D KNOW WHAT A THAGOMIZER IS, CALVIN, BECAUSE IT'S DINOSAUR RELATED! BUT A DURIAN IS A FRUIT THAT LOOKS LIKE A SPIKY YELLOW COCONUT

MAX, BUT LET ME GET BACK TO THE TRIP WITH KRAL TAR. WE WERE ALMOST AT THE RIFT BY THAT POINT.

ARE YOU NOT WORRIED ABOUT WHETHER YOUR BROTHER IS TELLING YOU THE TRUTH?

HE SAYS CALVIN TAKES MORE AFTER ME, WHICH IS TRUE

IT APPARENTLY STINKS, TOO, BUT I'VE ONLY EVER HAD DURIAN CANDY.

WHICH TASTES LIKE CARAMEL MIXED WITH RAW ONION. MAX LIKES IT. I SPIT IT OUT WHEN I TRIED TO YUK!



I SUPPOSE THERE ISN'T ENOUGH TIME TO TEST EVERY OTHER TYPE OF COMMANDMENT TO FIGURE OUT ALL THE ONES THAT HURT HIM? I MEAN, COMMANDMENT 89898, "THOU SHALT NOT NAME THINGS BASED SOLELY ON HOW COOL THOSE NAMES SOUND," IS ONE I'VE BROKEN SOMETIMES IN PRIVATE



THAT ONE DOESN'T HURT HIM EITHER, UNFORTUNATELY I'VE WATCHED YOU FROM HERE SOME TIMES, AND THINGS LIKE CALLING THE BIG BANG "THE HORRENDOUS SPACE KABLOOIE," OR CALLING A PERIWINKLE A "SORCERER'S VIOLET" DON'T DO ANYTHING TO HIM AT ALL THAT I CAN TELL.

IT IS UNCOMMON WE STARTED USING IT MORE AFTER BEING BACK STABBED ONE TOO MANY TIMES, WHEN A TELEPATH WAS AROUND BY SHEER COINCIDENCE AND SAVED US. THE MAGUS IS OUR STRONGEST LIVING TELEPATH, BUT EVEN AFTER HIS FAILURE TO CONVINCE YOUR KIND TO TURN AWAY FROM CHICKEN-LIKE THOUGHT, WE KEPT TRYING

I'VE HAPPENED TO LIVE IN THE SWEET SPOT BETWEEN DEMIURGE REGIMES, WHERE I'M OLD ENOUGH TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY, BUT NOT TOO OLD TO CHANGE MY WAYS AS LONG AS HE THINKS HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO CONVERT ME, HE WON'T TURN ON ME. BESIDES, WE ARE BROTHERS, WHICH SHOULD STILL MEAN SOMETHING

A POLITICALLY POWERFUL HUMAN WHOSE NAME I FORGOT MADE A DEAL TO HEAR A GROUP OF US OUT. WE WERE DISGUISED AS HUMANS, AS THE MAGUS HAD BEEN, BUT IT TURNED OUT TO BE AN AMBUSH. TELEPATHY WAS HOW WE DISCOVERED THE PLOT IN TIME TO ESCAPE.

BUT PART OF YOU STILL WORRIES THAT YOUR BROTHER WILL CHOOSE THE CHICKEN OVER YOU, AND TURN ON YOUR NEPHEW AS AN EXTENSION OF YOU, YES? I'M NOT TELEPATHIC, BUT THIS IS A SITUATION WHERE IT COULD BE NECESSARY TO HAVE ONE AVAILABLE.



THAT'S TRUE AND HOW DO YOUR PEOPLE HANDLE THINGS WITH TELEPATHY AVAILABLE? THE ETHICS INVOLVED SEEM SKETCHY TO ME. I CAN UNDERSTAND USING IT TO HELP STAY ALIVE, BUT

AND WE DID THE SAME TO THE REST OF THEM, SINCE IT WAS EITHER THEM OR US, AS THE TELEPATH ALSO FOUND. AFTER THIS HAVING TELEPATHS AVAILABLE BECAME STANDARD PROCEDURE. I UNDERSTAND YOU WERE THERE.

NO WHEN I SAID WE, I MEANT MY SPECIES. IF I HAD BEEN THERE, I WOULD LIKELY REMEMBER THE BETRAYER'S NAME. I KNOW HISTORY, BUT I AM NOT A HISTORIAN, AND THE EONS BLUR IN MY MIND AFTER LONG ENOUGH, AS IN ALL PHYSICAL MINDS

HOW DO YOU INTENTS KNOW TELEPATHS ARE PRODUCED COLORED TELLING THE AURAS AROUND THEM, AND THESE ARE UNFAIRABLE.



WE COMPLAINED THAT HE BROKE HIS END OF THE DEAL, AND HE SAID, "YOU CAN'T MAKE ME DO ANYTHING I DON'T WANT TO DO," AND SICCED HIS PEOPLE ON US. THE TELEPATH FOUND HE DID NOT WANT TO DIE WHERE HE STOOD, BUT WE MADE HIM DO THAT AFTER WE DROPPED OUR DISGUISES AND PUT HIM IN SHOCK.



THAT EXPLAINS EXACTLY WHY I OCCASIONALLY SEE ONE OF YOUR PEOPLE FLASH A CERTAIN COLOR. I THOUGHT I WAS SEEING THINGS!



IF ONLY YOU COULD SEE LL LET AS WE CAN! IT'S ALSO THE ONLY RELIABLE WAY TO FIND YALDA-BAAWK SUPPORTERS. THE CHICK-WHISTLES THEY CLAIM ARE SO WIDE SPREAD AS TO BE USE LESS AND WHILE TELE PATHS CANNOT DIRECTLY DETECT BRAINWASHING, THEY CAN DETECT INTENT TO SERVE THE CHICKEN



CALVIN WAIT, CHICK WHISTLES? MAX SYMBOLS, NUMBERS, AND OTHER THINGS THE CHICKEN CLAIMS AS SIGNS OF SUPPORT. CALVIN HOW DO NUMBERS WORK THAT WAY? MAX THEY DON'T HE MAKES THEM UP. CALVIN LIKE HOW? MAX SUPPOSEDLY, ONE IS HIS BECAUSE HE'S THE ONE TRUE GOD, TWO IS HIS BECAUSE HIS AXE CUTS THINGS IN TWO. THREE IS HIS BECAUSE HE BENT THE THREE OF THE OLD TRINITY TO HIS WILL, ETC. CALVIN WHAT ABOUT SIX, WHICH HE DOESN'T LIKE? MAX AN UPSIDE DOWN NINE STANDING FOR THE LETTERS IN "HOLY CHICK" HIM AS A KID, WHEN IT SUITS HIS PURPOSES.

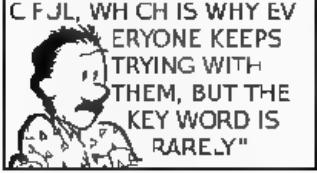
GOOD BUT IT'S ONES THAT OC- BROTHER HAVE CJR FAR AWAY, N SEEM- INGLY RANDOM PLACES?



YES, THERE ARE RUMORS THAT IT MIGHT ACTUALLY BE DIVINE PUNISH- MENT FOR HERE SY, WHICH STAR TED WITH THE ORCS SINCE THEY'RE UNEN- SLAVEABLE AND MOVED TO SIM-



WHICH ARE JUST THAT RU MORS RJMORS WHICH, IF THEY GET FROM THE LOWER DOCTORS TO THE FOUR HEALERS AT THE TOP, MAY WELL GIVE THEM AN EXCUSE TO STOP ALL TREATMENT OF IT. THE FOUR ARE, RARELY, MER C FJL, WH CH IS WHY EV ERYONE KEEPS TRYING WITH THEM, BUT THE KEY WORD IS RARELY."



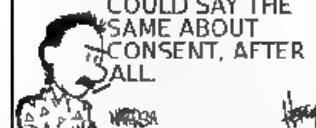
IS THIS NOT LIKE HOW IT WAS IN THE LAST FEW YEARS OF JESUS AND THE OTHERS, WHERE THEIR FOLLOWERS, INSTEAD OF NOT TAKING JOBS THEY WOULD DISAPPROVE OF TOOK THE JOBS ANYWAY, REFUSED TO DO THEM DUE TO THEIR "SINCERELY HELD RELIGIOUS BELIEFS" AND EXPECTED TO BE PAID REGARDLESS?

WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH IT?

WITHOUT TELEPA- THY, SINCERE BE- LIEF IS UNPROV- ABLE, SO IT MAY AS WELL BE EXCUSE AH I GUESS IT'S!



THE OLD TRINITY SHOULD HAVE BEEN OFFENDED BY ITS FOLLOWERS USING IT TO GET OUT OF DOING WORK, BUT IT WAS GOING CRAZY IN THE CHICKEN WAY EVEN THEN. EVEN SO, IT'S NOT FAIR TO JUDGE THE WHOLE CONCEPT BY HOW SOME PEOPLE WEAPONIZE IT I COULD SAY THE SAME ABOUT CONSENT, AFTER ALL.



MY APOLOGIES. IT'S EXHAUSTING TO KEEP FIGHTING THIS WAR, AND ALTHOUGH NEITHER OF OUR SPECIES ARE PERFECT, IT IS DIFFICULT TO FULLY UNDERSTAND YOUR SPECIES' VERSIONS OF SOME THINGS. I ASSUME THERE WAS FAVORITISM IN HOW THAT VERSION OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM WAS ENFORCED, HOWEVER?

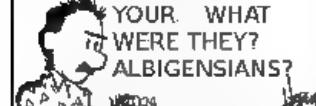


APOLOGY ACCEPTED JUST BECAUSE I'M IN THIS SPECIES DOESN'T MEAN I UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING IT DOES, EITHER. AND, YES, THERE WAS DEFINITE FAVORITISM. A WORSHIPPER OF RAZZENFRATTEN, GOD OF PROFANITY, COULDN'T GET ACCOMMODATION TO SWEAR CREATIVELY FIVE TIMES A DAY, EVEN WHEN HE WOULD TEND TO DO IT IN FRONT OF CUSTOMERS OR COWORKERS.

AND THE RENEGADE BRANCH OF CHRISTIANS, WHO FOCUSED MORE ON COMPASSION FOR ALL AND IGNORED THE BITS WHERE, TO QUOTE WIZARD SUNFLARE, "YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO LET JESUS SCOOP YOUR BRAIN OUT AND PUPPET YOU AROUND." YOU WERE NOT ACCOMMODATED EITHER? THE CHICKEN HAS NO PITY FOR THEM NOW.



I'M PRETTY SURE THEY'RE EXTINCT NOW, AND THE CHICKEN ONLY USES THEM AS A SCAPEGOAT WHEN HE HAS BAD DAYS. THEY WERE THE FIRST TARGETS OF THE ANTI-HERESY SQUADS, REMEMBER? SIMILAR TO WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR. WHAT WERE THEY? ALBIGENSANS?



THEY WERE NOT OURS, BUT THEY WERE INFLUENCED BY THE MAGUS IDEAS. SOME OF MY PEOPLE THOUGHT THEM HERETICS, BUT THEY WERE CLOSE ENOUGH TO BE SAVED FROM CHICKEN-STYLE THOUGHT WITH A FEW PLUSHES IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION UNTIL THEY WERE MASSACRED.



ALONG WITH THEIR NEIGHBORS, WHOSE ONLY CRIME WAS LIVING IN THE WRONG PLACE. "KILL THEM ALL AND LET GOD SORT THEM OUT," INDEED. AND THEN YOU ALL GAVE UP TRYING TO SAVE US, WENT TO WAR WITH THE CELESTIAL BIRDS YOURSELF, LOST, GOT EXILED TO A PLANET WITH NO SAPIENT LIFE, AND HAD TO EAT ITS LIFE ENERGY TO SURVIVE.

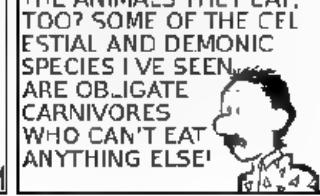
I WAS NOT ANOTHER AWARE THAT UNCOMMON YOUR KIND QUALITY IN OBJECTED THEM AND TO HERESY SHE DAB THAT MUCH BLED IN IT, AND WIZARD IN NOW SUNFLARE BURNED WAS A PHILOSOPHER?



SHE ALSO DISTINGUISHED BETWEEN CONSENT AS A WAY TO JUSTIFY AMORAL SELFISHNESS AND CONSENT WITH FAIRNESS INCLUDED, CALLING THE LATTER "INFORMED CONSENT." IT'S A SHAME THAT WISDOM IS SO OFTEN CONSIGNING TO THE REALM OF GHOSTS.



RIGHT, THE ANIMISM THING YOU TOLD ME ABOUT. ALTHOUGH HOW DO YOU AVOID BEING HAUNTED BY AN ENTIRE PLANET'S WORTH OF LIFE FORCE? DO MEAT EATERS GET HAUNTED BY THE ANIMALS THEY EAT, TOO? SOME OF THE CELESTIAL AND DEMONIC SPECIES I'VE SEEN ARE OBLIGATE CARNIVORES WHO CAN'T EAT ANYTHING ELSE!



THINGS DONE FOR SURVIVAL'S SAKE THAT MINIMIZE HARM GENERALLY DO NOT RESULT IN HAUNTINGS. AS FOR THE CASE THAT EVERYONE BRINGS UP, ABOUT THE VEGAN HAUNTED BY THE SPIRITS OF VENGEFUL TOMATOES UNTIL SHE WENT MAD, I DON'T KNOW THAT CASE HAS CERTAIN MISSING DETAILS. TOMATOES ARE USUALLY MELOW, FROM WHAT I HEAR.

TO GET BACK TO MY BROTHER'S LETTER, HE SAYS AND THAT CALVIN'S BEEN ACCEPTABLE, WHICH IS A TERM HE USES FOR "GOOD, BUT NOT GOOD ENOUGH."



I ASKED HIM IN MY LAST LETTER IF I COULD VISIT AGAIN, AND HE SAID "YOU'RE MY BROTHER AND I LOVE YOU, BUT YOUR LACK OF OPEN PIETY IS A PROBLEM. I SUSPECT IT'S EITHER ANTI-CHICKEN BIAS OR HERESY. IF YOU CAN PROVE OTHERWISE, THEN YES. IF NOT, I WILL NOT HAVE YOU PUTTING IDEAS IN MY SON'S HEAD, SO NO."

THAT IS WORRYING YAL DABAARK'S TREATING BIAS AND HERESY DIFFERENTLY IS ALSO SURPRISING. HE TREATED THEM IDENTICALLY WHEN HE FIRST ATTAINED GODHOOD.



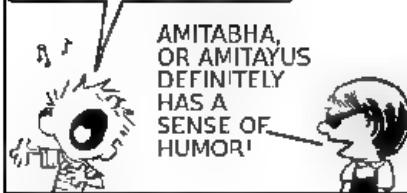
IT WAS PROBABLY TO GIVE HIMSELF AN EXCUSE TO MAKE MORE COMMANDMENTS BREAKING THE ONE ABOUT CHANGING THE LYRICS TO CHICKMAS CAROLS FOR FUN IS BIAS, BUT NOT HERESY. I FORGET ITS NUMBER, BUT YOU KNOW THE ONE



CALVIN: "WOW! LIKE WHAT? MAX, ONE THAT I HEARD WHEN I WAS A KID BACK WHEN IT WAS STILL A CHRISTMAS CAROL, WAS 'JOY TO THE WORLD.' THE SCHOOL BURNED DOWN, AND ALL THE TEACHERS DIED! EXCEPT FOR THE PRINCIPAL, WHO'S SITTING ON THE TOILET BOWL, THEN SOMEBODY FLUSHED HER DOWN, THEN SOMEBODY FLUSHED HER DOWN. THEN SO-D-O-O-O-O BODY FLUSHED HER DOWN! JOY TO THE WORLD!" CALVIN: "HA HA! WITH SOME TEACHERS I'VE HAD, THAT FITS! SARANNA, SING 'ROCK ME AMITAYUS' FOR US CALVIN!"

ONE SHORT MUSICAL INTERLUDE

"EVERYONE HAS BEEN YOUR MOTHER! BEEN YOUR MOTHER, BEEN YOUR MOTHER, BEEN YOUR MOTHER!"

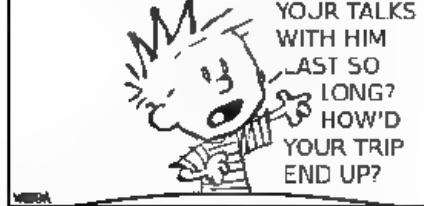


AND THEN BACK TO BUSINESS

WHEN YOU FIRST SANG IT, IT'S A GOOD THING NOBODY WALKED IN AND ONLY HEARD THE "YOUR MOTHER" PART, OR YOU'D LIKELY END UP IN TROUBLE!



IT'S COOL HEARING ABOUT HOW YOU WENT ON AN EXTENDED ADVENTURE THAT GOT YOU A CELESTIAL DINOSAUR FRIEND FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION, AND HOW HE AND HIS KIND ARE AT WAR WITH THE CHICKEN TOO, BUT DID ALL OF YOUR TALKS WITH HIM LAST SO LONG? HOW'D YOUR TRIP END UP?



I'M JUST ABOUT AT THE END OF THE TRIP. THE CONVERSATION WAS ONLY A FEW MINUTES LONG, BUT IT SEEMS LONGER IN THE TELLING. I'VE RAMBLED, BUT, MY BROTHER'S LETTERS SUGGESTED THAT HE WAS KEEPING YOU IN A TINY LITTLE BOX, SO TO SPEAK, AND NOT TEACHING YOU MUCH OTHER THAN OBEDIENCE. EVEN IF YOU FOUGHT IT.



HE KEEPS SAYING, "I HATE FORCE AND THREATS. I'LL DO SOMETHING ONLY IF I CHOOSE TO DO IT." I FIGURED OUT THAT WAS A BAD IDEA AFTER HE CHOSE TO SEND ME TO THE DUNGEON, BUT IT'S GOOD TO KNOW I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO GETS IT. HE HAS NO PROBLEM WITH FORCE AND THREATS WHEN HE JESUS THEM!

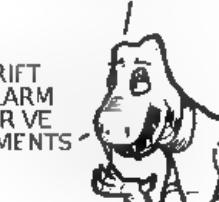


MAX: TYPICAL, BUT LET ME WRAP ALL THIS UP.

IF MY NEPHEW GETS DECLARED BIASED OR A HERETIC, HE'LL GET THE SAME KIND OF TERRIBLE HEALTH CARE MY CLIENT'S MATE IS GETTING, AND WITH ARSENIC FLORB SYNDROME SHOWING UP IN RANDOM PLACES.



THAT'S WHY YOU WORRY HER FATE COULD EASILY BE YOUR NEPHEW'S FATE, SO YOU ARE HOPING IT SOMEHOW WORKS OUT.



ONE LAST QUESTION: HOW CAN THE MAGUS BE LOST? CAN'T YOU STILL TALK TO HIS GHOST?



THE CHICKEN HAS DEVELOPED WAYS TO SILENCE GHOSTS WHOM HE DEEMS BAD ENOUGH.

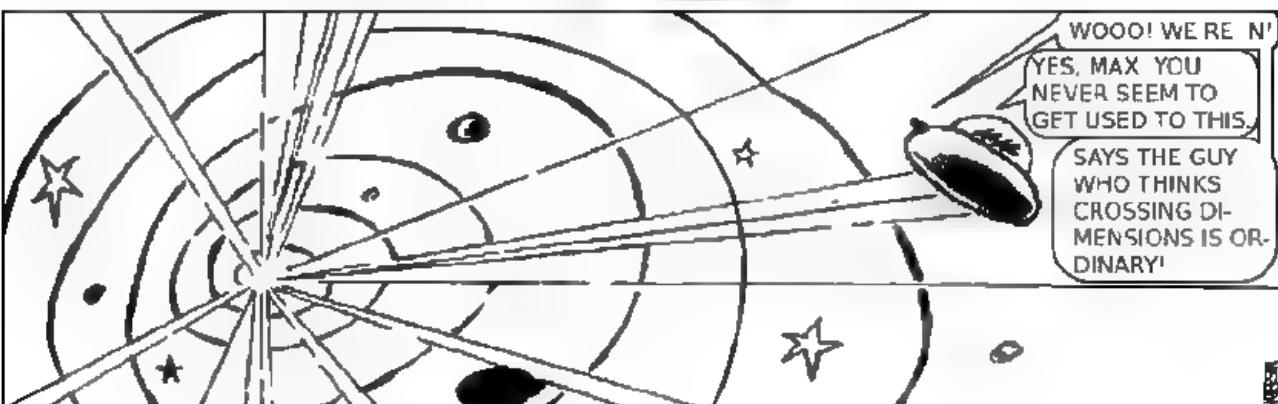
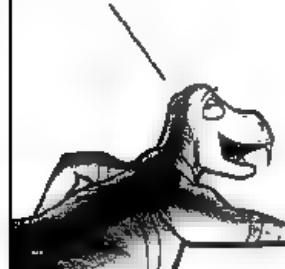


ALSO HAVE ONE LAST QUESTION: IF THE MAGUS COULDN'T BUY JESUS' POWER OR GET IT FROM HIM FOR FREE, WHAT WOULD HAVE WORKED?

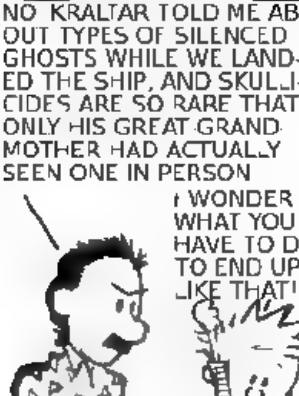
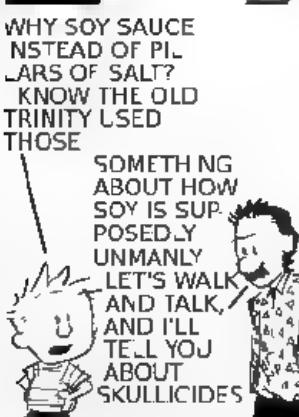
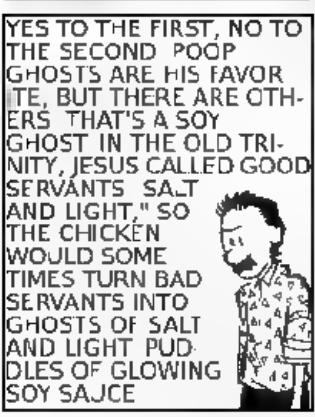
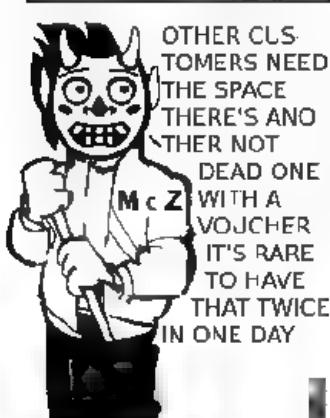
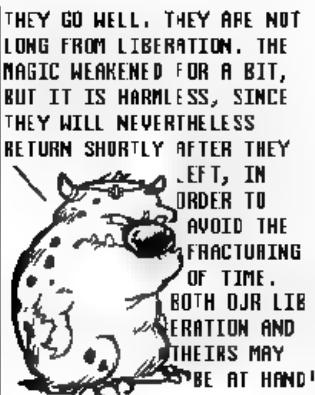
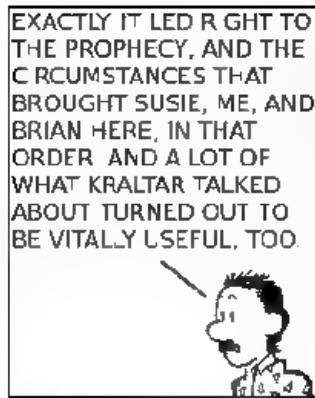
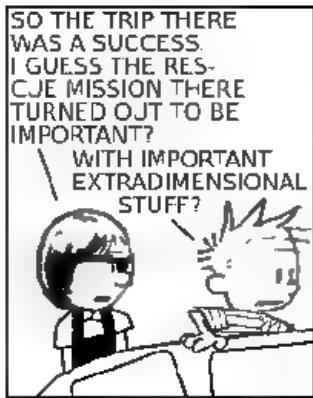


OTHER THAN FORCE, YOU MEAN? I DON'T KNOW.

UNFORTUNATE BUT THAT IS THE PAST, AND THIS IS THE PRESENT. THE RIFT BECKONS!



WOO! WE'RE IN!
YES, MAX, YOU NEVER SEEM TO GET USED TO THIS.
SAYS THE GUY WHO THINKS CROSSING DIMENSIONS IS ORDINARY!



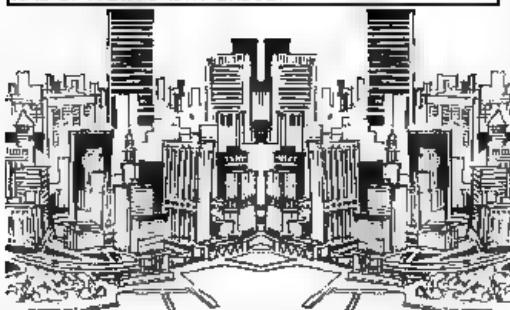
I DON'T THINK I WANT TO KNOW, MYSELF THE WORST CASE OF THE CHICKEN'S RAGE THAT I KNOW OF WAS WHEN HE TURNED. WHAT WAS THE NAME? NED SOMETHING? INTO A SOY GHOST FOR SAYING "HAPPY HOLI DAYS" INSTEAD OF MERRY CHICKMAS!"



SUCH BEHAVIOR RIVALS THAT OF OUR GODDESS OF INCOMPETENT REVENGE, A LESSER WIFE IN THE GOD OF INCOMPETENT DESIGN'S HAREM. AS MY PEOPLE WOULD SAY ABUTT: 3794555068539420623-1704928654925919276-3066032539477634748-3403255243718354423-2064856421357932225-1944293854186232595-3391157070286637946-3088101896353620482-2469500200454068310. IN SHORT, HER ACTIONS ARE BEYOND FOOLISHNESS.



MAX AFTER WE LANDED, WE WAITED ON THE OUT SKIRTS OF THE CITY FOR THE REFUGEES I'D SEEN ENOUGH CEL DINOS TO KNOW WHAT THEY LOOKED LIKE IN GENERAL BUT KRALTAH SAID THE MAGUS WAS OF A DIFFERENT BREED.



OUR CRAFT COULD ONLY HOLD A MAXIMUM OF FOUR PASSENGERS, SO TWO BE SIDES KRALTAH AND ME THERE WERE A LOT MORE REFUGEES THAN THAT IN THE CURRENT BATCH THAT CROWDED BEFORE US BUT THERE WERE JUST ENOUGH OTHER CRAFTS TO TAKE THEM.

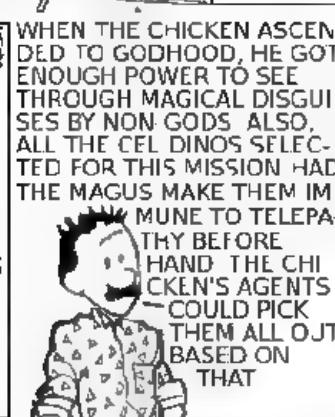


AND THEN A FEATHERY BLUR DARTED IN TO MY FIELD OF VISION THAT WAS SIMON MAGUSSAURUS, ARRIVING IN STYLE

BUT FOR THIS MISSION WE NEEDED SECRECY



YOU SAID THE CEL DINOS DISGUISED THEMSELVES AS PEOPLE IN THE PAST, RIGHT? SO WHY THE SECRECY? COULDN'T THEY DO THAT AGAIN?

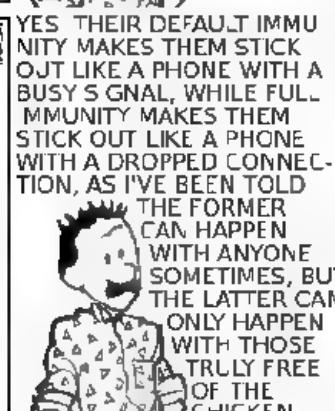


THAT STUFF ABOUT FALSE FORMS RIGHT? GIVEN WHAT I HAD TO GO THROUGH WITH MY COUSIN, I CAN CERTAINLY BE LIEVE TH'S WORLD IS BAD GUY HEAVEN AND WE'RE THE ONES THE BAD GUYS KEEP AROUND AS TOYS THEY CAN KEEP FIXING AND BREAKING UNTIL WE FIND A WAY OUT OF THEIR TOY BOX FOR GOOD IF I UNDERSTAND IT CORRECTLY?

YES, THAT'S A GOOD SUM MARY ALTHOUGH IT'S A SHAME YOU HAD TO GROW UP LIKE THAT



I DON'T GET IT YOU SAID THEY'RE IMMUNE TO CHICKEN STYLE TELEPATHY BY DEFAULT DOESN'T THAT MAKE THEM STICK OUT ALREADY? AND, IF SO, WHY GO TO MORE TROUBLE JUST TO STICK OUT MORE?

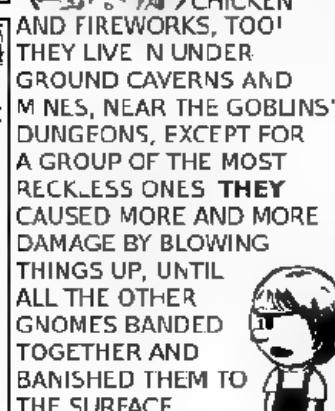


AND THEY NEED THE LATTER, BECAUSE ONCE THEY'RE OUT OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM, THEY'RE OUT OF THE CHICKEN'S JURISDICTION. HE CAN SEND AGENTS AFTER THEM THERE, BUT HE CAN'T GO IN PERSON AND HE CAN ONLY TURN THEM INTO SILENCED GHOSTS IN PERSON

MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE CHICKEN HAS SOME INDEPENDENT ALLIES THAT DON'T USE HIS FORM OF TELEPATHY. FULL IMMUNITY IS THE ONLY THING THAT'LL KEEP THEM OUT



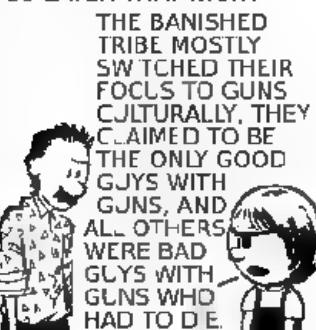
GUNPOWDER GNOMES? WHAT, ARE THEY COMPLETELY OBSESSED WITH FIREARMS AND EXPLOSIVES AND STUFF?



DID THEY ADAPT TO THE SURFACE BY ONLY COMING OUT AT NIGHT, AND COVERING THEMSELVES WITH TRENCHCOATS AND FEDORAS?



THAT MIGHT EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED TO US LATER THAT NIGHT



SO THEY'RE RADICAL TERRORISTS WHO WANT TO SHOOT EVERYONE WHO ISN'T THEM? DAD'S COMPLAINED ABOUT TERRORISTS A LOT, BUT NEVER ABOUT GNOME TERRORISTS!



THEY'RE USUALLY SMART ENOUGH TO ONLY GO AFTER "UNDESIRABLES," AND THEY HAVE A TENDENCY TO DECIDE THAT FELLOW GUN GNOMES ARE SUDDENLY BAD GUYS WHEN THEY WANT SOMETHING. THE OLD TRINITY LET THEM GET AWAY WITH A LOT BECAUSE ANY GUN RESTRICTIONS WOULD STOP THEM FROM EVENTUALLY RULING EARTH BY MASS SHOOTING ALL THE NON BELIEVERS



RIGHT. WHEN THE COMPASSIONATE RENEGADE CHRISTIANS WENT EXTINCT, BELIEF IN THE RAPSHOOT REPLACED BELIEF IN THE RAPT. RE AMONG THE OTHERS AND THE CHICKEN EXPLOITED THAT WHEN HE TOOK OVER, OFFERING AUTONOMY IN THE LIBERTY TOWNS INSTEAD OF IMMEDIATE EXECUTIONS

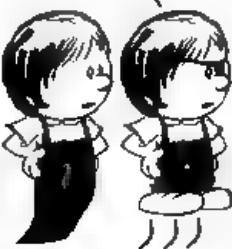
AND THE GJN GNOMES HAD WINNED THEM SELVES DOWN TO A TINY GROUP BY THAT POINT TO SURVIVE, THEY WILL ONLY SERVE THE CHICKEN NOW AND SHOOT ONLY WHO HE WANTS SHOT THE GOBLINS WARNED ME ABOUT THEM EARLY ON, AND EVEN THE OTHER GNOMES DESPISE THEM NOW, I'VE HEARD

WHY DID THE CHICKEN MAKE A DEAL WITH THEM INSTEAD OF JUST ENSLAVING THEM AS HE DID THE GOBLINS?



DUNGEONS FIT HIS PLR POSES MORE THAN CAVERNS OR MINES, AND THE GOBLINS TENDED TO BE STRONGER THAN GNOMES. ALSO THE GJN GNOMES COULDNT HURT HIM WITH THEIR GUNS, AND THEY NEEDED PROTECTION FROM ALL THE ENEMIES THEY'D MADE BEING FORCED TO FOLLOW THE CHICKEN'S RULES ALSO PUT SOME LIMITS ON THEM, BUT I'M NOT SURE I UNDERSTAND ONE OF THE RULES

BUT WHAT IS I DON'T SPERM, ANYWAY? KNOW AND WHY DOES WHAT IT THE CHICKEN IS, GO OFF ABOUT EITHER! T?



THEY CAN'T BE FULLY DISARMED, BECAUSE THEY CAN TRANSFORM CERTAIN BODY PARTS INTO GUNS AND USE THOSE, AND ONE RULE FORBIDS TURNING SPERM INTO BULLETS.

UH IT WOULD BE TOO HARD TO AIM SO MANY AT ONCE!

OTHER THAN AS A WORD THAT CAN FREAK DAD OUT, I DON'T KNOW EITHER!

IT'S NOTHING ANY OF YOU NEED TO WORRY ABOUT RIGHT NOW NOT UNTIL THE CHICKEN IS DEPOSED TRUST ME

MY COUSIN ONCE SAID SHOOTING SOMEONE WAS JUST LIKE MAKING YOLKS WITH THEM, SINCE YOU'RE EITHER TAKING OR MAKING LIFE, SO SHOOTING THEM THE WRONG WAY ACTUALLY BREAKS THE MATING RULES

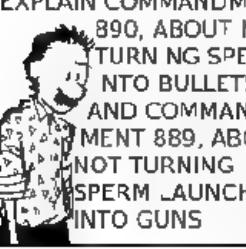
IF YOU SHOOT THEM WITH THOSE BULLETS, YES

MAX BUT I'M GETTING AHEAD OF MYSELF AGAIN THE MAGUS WAS FRIENDLY ENOUGH BUT I WONDERED WHY HE SEEMED A BIT DISTRACTED.

I CAN SEE VETHION AND KHALARI IN THE SKY NOW IF I CAN SEE MARS AND SATURN IN THE SKY ON EARTH, IT'S TIME



THAT MISSION COULD HAVE GONE A LOT WORSE, THEN, IF THEY'D GROWN MORE GUNS AND THAT DOES FINALLY EXPLAIN COMMANDMENT 890, ABOUT NOT TURNING SPERM INTO BULLETS, AND COMMANDMENT 889, ABOUT NOT TURNING SPERM LAUNCHERS INTO GUNS

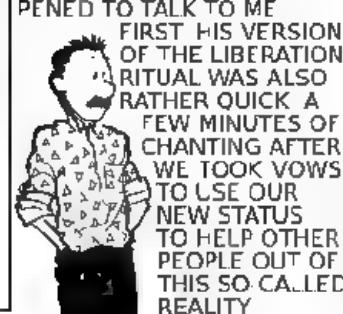


YES, HE DID, AND YOU HAVE MY THANKS FOR BEING AN ALLY OF OUR PEOPLE AS FOR THE TIME, A PROPHECY MAY BE COMING TRUE

ONE THAT MAY WELL END YALDA-BAAWK'S POWER

WASN'T THE ONLY ONE

THERE WERE A FEW OTHER HUMANS THERE WHO NEEDED IT, TOO. HE JUST HAPPENED TO TALK TO ME FIRST. HIS VERSION OF THE LIBERATION RITUAL WAS ALSO RATHER QUICK. A FEW MINUTES OF CHANTING AFTER WE TOOK VOWS TO USE OUR NEW STATUS TO HELP OTHER PEOPLE OUT OF THIS SO-CALLED REALITY



BUT AS EXCITING AS THAT IS, THERE'S THE MATTER OF KEEPING IT OUT OF THE WRONG MINDS



THE MAGS MEANS IMMUNITY FROM TELEPATHY, AS I SPOKE OF EARLIER. I'VE HAD IT FOR AWHILE. DO YOU TRUST ME WHEN I SAY IT WILL DO YOU NO HARM, AND HELP YOU IN THE LONG TERM?

MAX, DID MY NEXT QUESTION WAS, "WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?"

VOW TO STAY AROUND LONG ENOUGH TO HELP MY BROTHER AND SISTER-IN-LAW IF THEY CAN BE HELPED, AND TO HELP MY NEPHEW REGARDLESS. AND IF THE CHICKEN BANS PHILLY CHEESESTEAKS IN ANY FORM, I VOW TO COME BACK AROUND ON PRINCIPLE FOR THIS, I AT TAIN GNOSIS

MAX BREAKING ONE ARBITRARY RULE IN YOUR VOWS WAS APPARENTLY A TRADITION AS WELL

SO HE PAUSED THE WHOLE MISSION TO GET RID OF YOUR FALSE FORM? I WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THEY WERE UNDER A TIME LIMIT!



WHY WERE VOWS NECESSARY, SINCE HE COULD READ YOUR MINDS?

THE IMPORTANCE OF CONVICTION, AND A WAY FOR US TO MORE EASILY STICK AROUND AS GHOSTS, IF NEED BE

MAX

WHAT WAS THE ACTUAL RITUAL LIKE? DID YOU FEEL ANY DIFFERENT AFTERWARD? AND DID YOU GET ANY PRIVACY DURING THE WHOLE THING, SINCE IT SEEMS RATHER PERSONAL?



THERE WERE IMPROMPTU PRIVACY BOOTHES SET UP, YES THEY WERE NORMALLY USED FOR BATTLEFIELD RITUALS, BJT, GVN THE MISSION'S RISKS, THE DINOS FIGURED THEY WERE NECESSARY. AND THEY WERE RIGHT, AS IT TURNED OUT



MAX, THE RITUAL ITSELF WAS A BLUR, AND THEN

WHOA, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK NOW!



DON'T WORRY, YOU'LL SOON ADJUST!

T WAS BEING BROKEN, BEING PUT BACK TOGETHER A NEW WAY, AND REALIZING THAT THE OLD WAY I WAS PUT TOGETHER WAS ALL WRONG, DESPITE FEELING RIGHT

SOUNDS SIMILAR TO MY DEAL WITH THE SNOW DEMONS



I SUPPOSE, ALTHOUGH I DIDN'T MAKE ME SEE DIFFERENTLY IN THAT SENSE ALL THE TALK ABOUT ALIEN MINDS' BEING IMMUNE TO TELEPATHY, IT'S GOOD TO KNOW, BUT WHAT ABOUT FEY LIKE THE GOBLINS?



YEAH! YOU SAID THE CHICKEN COULDN'T READ THEM, AND I NEVER FIGURED OUT WHAT THEY EAT, SINCE THEY DON'T EAT WITH THE INMATES!



YOU'RE PROBABLY THINKING SOMETHING SCARY, LIKE THE BLOOD OF THE INNOCENT, BUT NO, THEY CAN EAT THE SAME FOOD AS MORTALS. BOTH THE GOBLINS AND THE GNOMES COME FROM THE ALTERWORLD, A warped reflection of THIS WORLD THAT'S STILL SIMILAR ENOUGH TO OURS THAT THEY WERE ABLE TO ADAPT WITHOUT MUCH TROUBLE.



KRALTA R ONLY KNEW THEY'RE IMMUNE TO CHICKEN-STYLE TELEPATHY. THE CEL DINOS HADN'T DEALT MUCH WITH THEM, BUT THE PROPHECY THE MAGUS MENTIONED

TURNED OUT TO INVOLVE THEM. I'M NOT OLD ENOUGH YET TO KNOW WHAT DROVE THEM TO THIS WORLD



I WONDER HOW THE GOBLINS ENDED UP ENSLAVED. DON'T THEY HAVE OTHER WORLDLY DEFENSES, OR SECRET NINJA SQUADS, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT?

MAX SO MY HEAD SPUN FOR A FEW MINUTES, BUT AFTER I AND ALL THE OTHER NEWLY LIBERATED HUMANS RECOVERED, WE GOT ALL THE REFUGEES IN TO THE SPACECRAFTS, LIFTED OFF AND CROSSED DIMENSIONS AGAIN. LITTLE DID ANY OF US KNOW WHAT AWAITED BACK ON EARTH.

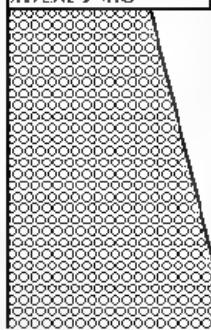


SARANNA, I'M NOT OLD ENOUGH TO KNOW ALL THE DETAILS OF THAT EITHER, BUT THEY DON'T HAVE NINJA SQUADS. THEY HAVE WRESTLING SQUADS, PER ANCIENT TRADITION. ALTHOUGH AFTER THEY CAME TO THIS WORLD, THEY LEARNED ABOUT OTHER FORMS OF WRESTLING, AND ADOPTED SOME CUSTOMS FROM THEM.

WHAT IS THIS?



DUNGEON GOBLINS MAGICAL LUCHADOR MATCHES CAN BE INTERESTING



I MAGICALLY BUILD A WALL OF TEXT! MY STORY IS TOLD!

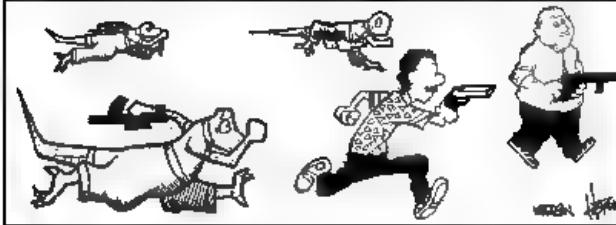
NO! THE JOURNEY IS IN THE DETAILS! I MAGICALLY ATTACK!



I BREAK YOUR WALL! YOUR STORY IS NOW, 'BAD GUYS CONQUER THE WORLD; GOOD GUYS FREE IT; THE END!'



KRALTA R HAD TOLD THE OTHERS ABOUT YALDABAARK'S WEAKNESS TO BLASPHEMY, AND HOW HE D EXPLOITED IT. JUST BEFORE THE MISSION, ALL THE OTHER CEL DINOS WERE INCREDULOUS. THE MAGUS MOST OF ALL. ONE OF THE OTHERS, THALVI, SAID THAT PUTTING THE ENEMY AT LEAST PARTIALLY OUT OF COMMISSION WOULD ONLY HELP US. WE WERE STILL ALL ARMED, JUST IN CASE. ALTHOUGH THE CEL DINOS' GUNS FIRED LASERS AND NOT BULLETS. AFTER LANDING FAR ENOUGH AWAY FROM THE RIFT, WE SPUN TOWARD THE SPACECRAFT HANGAR IN THE NEARBY WOODS, BUT THEY TURNED OUT TO NOT BE EMPTY



WE'D OCCASIONALLY SEE A FEW OF THESE SHORT PEOPLE (OR GUN GNOMES) AS SARANNA POINTED OUT HUNTING FOR FOOD IN THE WOODS, BUT THE ONES HERE TONIGHT WERE HUNTING US.



ELSEWHERE

EFFHHH! SOMFONE TURN THE LIGHTS DOWN! IT'S BAD ENOUGH THAT ONLY BREZZIK'S TEAM COULD RESPOND IN TIME!



IF HE GIVES ME THAT SPIFI AGAIN ABOUT HOW HIS INSTRUCTIONS ARE TOO COMPLICATED, AND HOW I'M CONDESCENDING IF I GIVE HIM SIMPLIFIED INSTRUCTIONS, I SWEAR I'LL TURN ALL HIS LIMBS INTO BALLOON ANIMALS!



YOU' GOOD SERVANT! TURN THE LIGHTS DOWN, OR FACE MY WRATH!

AS YOU COMMAND, BIRD-KING OF BIRD-KINGS.



IT'S NOT FAIR THAT ONLY I SUFFER! MY BELOVED BUTT-VICEROY, SINCE YOU'RE ALSO VULNERABLE TO BLASPHEMY, YOU CAN SHARP IN MY MIGRAINE, AS A GOOD UNDERLING SHOULD!

PTH!

BBTTPPBBPPI

I HAVE LOWERED THE LIGHTS. I SERVE THE TR...

GOOD I'LL GO MAKE MYSELF FEEL BETTER BY INFECTING SOME HERFTICS WITH ACCELERATED ARJENFLORB SYNDROME. IT'S NOT KILLING ALL THE RIGHT PEOPLE OR DOING IT FAST ENOUGH, ON ITS OWN!

MAX AFTER THE FIRST SHOOTER HAD GOTTEN OFF A FEW SHOTS, A SECOND SHOOTER PULLED OUT HIS GUN AND JOINED HIM. WE DUCKED BEHIND TREES AND SHOT BACK. THERE WERE ONLY A FEW OF THEM. BUT THEIR BULLETS TRACKED US, SOMEHOW!

FEY MAG C CAN IMPROVE SOMEONE'S AIM. NEVER PLAY DARTS WITH A GOBLIN UNLESS THEY'RE FIRST BOUND TO NOT USE MAG C, AS THE SAYING GOES

THAT WOULD EXPLAIN IT. THE SEEKING WAS IMPERFECT, AND HIT THE TREES FOR THE MOST PART. WE FINALLY TOOK THEM ALL DOWN MOSTLY WITH THE CEL-DINO LASERS SET TO WIDE BEAM

MAX AND APPARENTLY THE TRACKING STOPPED WHEN THEY DIED. THERE WAS ONE LAST BULLET IN THE AIR, AND IT WAS CURVING TOWARD US UNTIL IT WASN'T. IT ENDED UP GOING RIGHT INTO ME AND THE MAGUS WAS BEHIND ME AT THE TIME AND LOWER TO THE GROUND, SO IF I HADN'T TAKEN IT HE WOULD HAVE TAKEN IT IN THE NECK



AGHH!
I'VE
BEEN
SHOT!

POW!

FIND THE
NEAREST
HEALER!

ELSEWHERE AGAIN

WHAT! THEY HAVE TARGET-SEEKING MAGICAL BULLETS, AND ONLY ONE OF THEIR SHOTS CAUSES A DECENT INJURY. LET ALONE GETS ANYWHERE NEAR THE RIGHT TARGET?! I SHOULD HAVE GUIDED THEM MYSELF! IF ONLY THIS MIGRAINE WEREN'T MAKING ME GO CROSS-EYED!

IT FOULED MY AIM! SOME OF THE PEOPLE I INFECTED WERE THE WRONG ONES! WHY MUST SOME OF THEM BE SO MUCH ALIKE? OH, WELL, RANDOM INFECTIONS SHOULD INCREASE PROPER FEAR OF ME!

YOU WERE LUCKY THE GNOMES ONLY HAD MAGICALLY AIMED GUNS, AND NOT ROCKET LAUNCHERS OR SOMETHING! UNLESS THE DINOS' MAGICAL HEALING WAS JUST THAT GOOD!



INDEED ONE SMALL PIECE OF METAL IMPALING YOU NON-ROBOTS IN THE WRONG PLACE CAN SO EASILY BREAK YOU. SUCH VULNERABILITY SHOULD MAKE YOUR KIND MORE CAUTIOUS, BUT I HAVE LEARNED THAT IT IS NOT THE CASE FROM MANY GHOSTS HERE.



BACK AMONG THE GHOSTS

IS THAT WHEN YOU DIED, MAX? IT WAS NEVER CLEAR TO ME AFTER OUR LAST CONVERSATION

NO HE DIDN'T DIE UNTIL A DIFFERENT INCIDENT A FEW WEEKS LATER!



SUSIE'S RIGHT THE CEL-DINOS MAGICAL HEALING WORKED MUCH BETTER THAN OUR MUNDANE VERSION, EVEN WITHOUT THE CHICKEN'S RUINING IT



BLT BEFORE THAT SINCE YOU TOOK A BULLET MEANT FOR ME AND LIKELY SAVED MY LIFE WHAT BOON WOULD YOU HAVE FOR THAT?



MARS AND SATURN ARE VISIBLE IN THE SKY HERE! THE PROPHECY IS TRUE, AND YOU ARE PART OF IT! THE CHICKEN SHALL FALL!



YOU MEAN LIBERATE HIM THE WAY I DID YOU, YES?

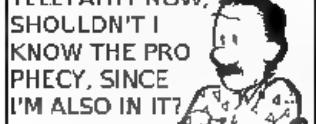
YES. IT'S A WAY TO KEEP HIM OUT OF THE CHICKEN'S TALONS IF THINGS REALLY GO BAD.



CAN DO BETTER THAN THAT! ALL THOSE ON OUR SIDE IN THE PROPHECY NEED TO BE LIBERATED AND YOUR NEPHEW IS AMONG THEM! BRING HIM TO ME (AND THE OTHERS IF YOU CAN), AND I WILL LIBERATE THEM ALL!



THANK YOU! I'M STILL TRYING TO PROCESS EVERYTHING, FROM MY BRUSH WITH DEATH TO THE IDEA THAT I'VE LIKELY BEEN REINCARNATED A BUNCH OF TIMES, AND NOW THERE'S A PROPHECY SINCE I'M IMMUNE TO TELEPATHY NOW, SHOULDN'T I KNOW THE PROPHECY, SINCE I'M ALSO IN IT?



YOU SHOULD GIVE ME A MOMENT TO FIND ONE OF OUR LORI MASTERS!



IF IT'S COMPLEX ENOUGH IS THERE A SAFE WAY TO WRITE IT DOWN, OR MUST I MEMORIZE IT?



The Prophecy

The destroyers of the chicken are a dimension-traveling chowderhead with the blood of both a hero and a traitor, a nature-twisting seer who gains insight after they start to lose their reflection, a guide who leads them from low paths to high, and a courageous animus who channels the power of six. Only when the chowderhead and the seer are brought together will destiny begin to guide, and only when the power of six becomes known to all four will destiny be fulfilled.

The hero will save a wizard when worlds of war and liberation are seen twice over, and die when someone they trust turns on them. The traitor will gain and lose power by betraying everyone they hold dear, last of all themselves. The reflector will take the blow meant for what it reflects. The guide will be hidden from their enemies until those they must guide know what must be done. The animus will fight the rear while the other

three fight the front

Through their allies, the four will bring together the powers of gods, celestials, fey, and demons, and the strengths of technology, magic, logic, illogic, and goblin know-how. The day will be won by the twisting of space and the unexpected changing of sides.

I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT LOSING MY REFLECTION MEANS! THE SNOW DEMONS DIDN'T TURN ME INTO A VAMPIRE, AS FAR AS I CAN TELL!
...OH.

YOU DON'T KNOW HOW SUSIE DIED I DON'T HAVE LONG ENOUGH TO TELL YOU LAST TIME.

ELSEWHERE, AGAIN

THE GUN GNOME SQUAD IS ALL DEAD, BUT MOST OF THEIR CORPSES ARE INTACT ENOUGH THAT I CAN LISTEN THROUGH THEIR EARS! WHAT? THE RANDOM MAN WHO GOT SHOT IS HEARING ABOUT A PROPHECY? IF BREZZIK WEREN'T ALREADY DEAD AND UNOFFICIALLY OUT OF MY RANGE, I'LL TAKE IT OUT ON HIS BLOODLINE! THE ENTIRE SHOOTERBERG CLAN IS OFFICIALLY UP FOR SPECIAL PUNISHMENT! THEY'LL PAY FOR ALL THE TIMES BREZZIK TOLD ME TO MATE WITH MYSELF FOR POINTING OUT HIS MISTAKES! GRRR!

SO YOU WERE ONE OF THE ANOMALOUS CASES OF IT? WHAT DID OUR PARENTS DO?



I WAS AN ANOMALOUS AND ACCELERATED CASE THEY DIDN'T EXPECT THAT! WE MOVED OUT OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD I'D GROWN UP IN, TRYING TO FIND A DOCTOR WHO'D BOTHER TREATING IT

ROBOTS HAVE LOWER CLASSES AND DISEASES?

IT'S A LONG STORY, WHICH BRIAN TOLD US WHEN HE GOT HERE

WE HAVE FAULTY MANUFACTURING AND FRESHMAN-LEVEL CLASSES WERE MORE OF A PROBLEM IN ANCIENT TIMES, WHERE LIVES IN DRAUGR DRUGS WERE PRIVILEGED OVER ONES IN BLUE PLATING, DESPITE BEING OTHERWISE IDENTICAL.

IT IS NOT SOMETHING WE ARE PROUD OF TODAY, DESPITE A FEW ATAVISMS WHO ARE.

YOU KNEW HER THEN? AND I GUESS THIS IS HOW MAX LEARNED ABOUT THE HOLY DOCTORS?

NO, I ONLY HEARD ABOUT HER FROM MAX AFTER I DIED. WE DID END UP IN THE SAME PLACE, BUT NOT

AT THE SAME TIME AS FOR THE HOLY DOCTORS, YES

BACK AMONG THE GHOSTS, AGAIN

THAT'S A LONG AND COMPLICATED PROPHECY! AT LEAST THEY LET YOU WRITE IT DOWN!

TWICE THEY BURNED A COPY SO ITS GHOST WOULD BE AT THE LIBRARY HERE

SO THAT'S WHY YOU MOVED AWAY OUT OF THE BLUE LACK OF TREATMENT OPTIONS, PLUS THE STIGMA OF TS BEING A LOWER-CLASS DISEASE! YIKES!

IT IS A SHAME THAT MALARIA UNJUSTLY GET SORTED BY CLASS.

ARJENFLORB SYNDROME IS ONE OF THE SYSTEMIC DISEASES. INABILITY TO KEEP FOOD DOWN, LIMB WEAKNESS, BAD BALANCE, DISRUPTED SLEEP SCHEDULE. A LOT OF DIFFERENT THINGS ARE AFFECTED

I'VE HEARD YOU CAN KEEP IT UNDER CONTROL FOR A WHILE IF YOU DO THINGS RIGHT.

THE SONG MOSTLY DOES THEM JUSTICE, BUT MISSES A FEW DETAILS. THEY'D EFFECTIVELY TORTURE THEIR NON-RICH PATIENTS WHEN THEY DIDN'T LEAVE THEM TO DIE. MY CLIENT'S MATE HAD BEEN THROUGH A LONG LOOP OF "I'M NOT GOING TO TREAT YOU" PROGRESSING TO "I'M NOT GOING TO TREAT YOU IT'D BE TOO MUCH WORK SINCE YOU'VE GONE UNTREATED SO LONG."

I "STARTED LOSING" YOU JUST BEFORE MY DEAL WITH THE SNOW DEMONS ON MARCH FOURTEENTH OF THAT REALLY COLD YEAR?

I CAME DOWN WITH ARJENFLORB SYNDROME ON THE THIRTEENTH!

AND MY CLIENT'S MATE WITH IT, FROM MY SECOND JOB, SHOWED ME EXACTLY HOW THE SYNDROME PROGRESSES AT NORMAL SPEED, WHICH IS BAD ENOUGH!

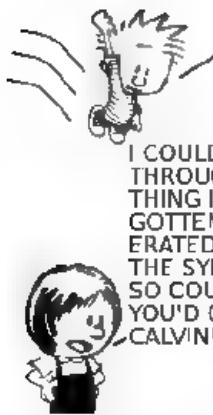
IT IS A SHAME THAT MALARIA UNJUSTLY GET SORTED BY CLASS.

ONLY IF YOU AREN'T TOO POOR TO AFFORD WHAT YOU NEED TO KEEP IT UNDER CONTROL, AND YOU DON'T HAVE CERTAIN ALLERGIES THAT GET IN THE WAY OF THAT. MY CLIENT'S MATE WON THE BAD LUCK LOTTERY FOR BOTH

GOT SOME SYMPATHY FOR BEING A KID. SHE DIDN'T.

SHE HAD GOTTEN SOME TREATMENT OVER THE YEARS, BUT IT WASN'T CONSISTENT ENOUGH TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE, BECAUSE NO DOCTORS WERE REQUIRED TO TREAT HER OUTSIDE A HOSPITAL, AND EVEN THEN

HAD SLIGHTLY BETTER LUCK, BUT IT DIDN'T LAST



WHY IS SHE SO IMPORTANT, WHEN SHE WAS JUST THE SIGNIFICANT OTHER OF ONE OF YOUR CLIENTS? NOT THAT SHE DESERVED TO GO THROUGH ALL THAT!

I COULD HAVE GONE THROUGH THE SAME THING IF I HADN'T GOTTEN THE ACCELERATED VERSION OF THE SYNDROME! AND SO COULD YOU, IF YOU'D CAUGHT IT, CALVIN!

EXACTLY. IT WAS WHAT SHOWED ME HOW BAD THE SYSTEMS SET UP BY THE CHICKEN REALLY WERE.



SHE'D GONE THROUGH SO MANY DOCTORS THAT SHE'D HAD TO DEAL WITH THE BIG FOUR PERSONALLY. I WASN'T A DIRECT WITNESS TO IT ALL, BUT WHAT I DID SEE WAS MORE THAN ENOUGH. IT WAS MUCH LIKE MY EXPERIENCE IN THE FIRST LIBERTY TOWN, OR WHAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IF I HADN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET OUT AND FIND ANOTHER

WHAT WERE THE FOUR LIKE? LIKE ANYONE WITH TOO MUCH POWER AND TOO LITTLE FEAR OF WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THEY USED IT, WHETHER MORTAL, DEMIGOD, OR ANYTHING ELSE

MY CLIENT TOLD ME THE SHORT VERSION OF WHAT SHE'D BEEN THROUGH ALREADY. ONE OF THE FOUR SAID, "IF YOU LOOK AT THE WRONG THING, I'M NOT GOING TO TREAT YOU." SHE TRIED TO QUALIFY AS DISABLED WITH ANOTHER OF THE FOUR, WHO SAID, "I'M NOT GOING TO SIGN A PIECE OF PAPER TO HELP SOMEONE GET ON DISABILITY." THE THIRD THREW AN HOURLONG TANTRUM ABOUT HOW SHE NEEDED TO ALWAYS TAKE HER MEDICATION ON TIME (DESPITE HER DISRUPTED SLEEP SCHEDULE), FILLED THE PRESCRIPTION FOR HER MEDICATION EXACTLY ONCE, AND BLEW HER OFF WHEN SHE TRIED TO GET IT REFILLED. THE FOURTH WAS THE ONE IN THE HOSPITAL WHEN SHE GOT BAD ENOUGH THAT SHE HAD TO GO THERE, WHERE HE HAD TO TREAT HER.

DID THAT WORK OUT ANY BETTER? NO, THE HOSPITALS HAD A TIME LIMIT ON HOW LONG YOU COULD STAY THERE, AND THEN YOU'D GET THROWN OUT WHETHER YOU WERE HEALED OR NOT. HOW RIDICULOUS!

IT'S WORSE THAN RIDICULOUS, IT'S EITHER NEGLECTFUL OR MALICIOUS. HE TOLD HER SHE NEEDED A SPECIAL DIET TO KEEP THE SYNDROME UNDER CONTROL, BUT COULDN'T BE BOthered TO TELL HER WHAT IT WAS, AND THEN TWISTED EVERYTHING SHE AND MY CLIENT SAID INTO AN EXCUSE TO GET RID OF HER. EVEN BEFORE THAT, HE HAD IT IN FOR HER.

SO HE COULD BE FORCED TO DO HIS SUPPOSED JOB, BUT NOT FORCED TO ACTUALLY DO IT WELL?

EXACTLY. THE HOSPITAL HAD PHYSICAL THERAPISTS WHO WERE SUPPOSED TO HELP HER REGAIN SOME STRENGTH IN HER WEAKENED LIMBS, BUT WHEN SHE WAS PHYSICALLY UNABLE TO DO SOME OF THE EXERCISES, THEY SAID IT WAS JUST "FEAR" ON HER PART AND WROTE ON HER PAPERWORK THAT SHE "REFUSED" TO DO THEM, AND THE SO-CALLED DOCTOR WENT ALONG WITH THAT AS AN EXCUSE TO THROW HER OUT FASTER.

WHAT HAPPENED TO HER AFTER THAT?

SHE WAS WORRIED ABOUT HAVING HER INABILITY TO KEEP FOOD DOWN COME BACK, AND NEITHER SHE NOR MY CLIENT HAD REBELLED ENOUGH AGAINST THE CHICKEN TO GET THE PRIVILEGES I DID SO THEY WERE IN BAD HOUSING WHERE SHE WAS LIKELY TO HAVE A HEALTH CRISIS AGAIN SOON. THE SO-CALLED DOCTOR DISMISSED IT AS "SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND NON-SENSE PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES," THREW A FIT, AND STOMPED OUT LIKE A PETULANT TODDLER. I WAS A DIRECT WITNESS TO IT ALL. AND YES, HER SYMPTOMS DID COME BACK, BUT SHE ENDED UP RIGHT BACK THERE IN FRONT OF H.M., SO

THEY DIDN'T REBEL ENOUGH? THAT ACTUALLY MADE A DIFFERENCE?

RIGHT. MY BANDMATES AND I HAD GOTTEN A LITTLE TIME, BUT NEITHER OF THEM HAD ANGERED THE CHICKEN'S AUTHORITIES QUITE ENOUGH FOR THAT. MOST OF THEIR REBELLION WAS ON THE RELIGIOUS FRONT REGARDING THAT. HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF TIGHMANISM?

MY COUSIN MENTIONED IT ONCE AS AN EXAMPLE OF A BAD RELIGION BECAUSE ITS FOUNDER WAS A MORTAL WOMAN WHO DIDN'T KNOW HER PLACE DESPITE MY COUSIN'S BEING A WOMAN TOO.

SUPPOSE SHE ALSO SAID THAT JILL TIGHMAN'S BURNING TO DEATH IN A MEANINGLESS ACCIDENT WAS HER GETTING WHAT SHE DESERVED? AS OPPOSED TO THE TIGHMANITE VIEW THAT LIFE DOESN'T NEED MEANING, WE SHOULD TAKE JOY IN ITS MEANINGLESSNESS, AND HER DEATH WAS A FULFILLMENT OF THAT?

I'M NOT SURE

I GUESS? SHE DID SAY THEY WERE CRAZY! I REMEMBER THAT MUCH!

IT SOUNDS FAMILIAR. WHAT ELSE IS IT KNOWN FOR?

LET'S SEE. DON'T DO ANYTHING JUST FOR CONFORMITY OR VANITY'S SAKE, THE ONLY UNIVERSAL THING IS OVERKILL. THE UNIVERSE IS THE DIVINE MADNESS AND ALL GODS ARE FRAGMENTS OF IT.

IF IT DOESN'T HAVE THE PLEROMA COUNCIL, WHICH YOU KNOW IS HERE, IS IT EVEN FROM THIS REALITY?

GOOD QUESTION! IT ISN'T HUMAN REFUGEES FROM ANOTHER REALITY I BROUGHT IT HERE TO ONE OF THE LIBERTY TOWNS.

MAX IT SPREAD TO SEVERAL OTHER LIBERTY TOWNS FROM THERE AND GAINED CONVERTS CALVIN. WAIT... ARE THEY THE ONES WHO SAY "THE DIVINE MADNESS DOES WHAT IT WILL," AND DON'T PRAY? MAX EXACTLY! "DOES A TIGHMANITE PRAY?" IS FOR OBVIOUS NO QUESTIONS. CALVIN, NOW I REMEMBER! DAD RANTED ABOUT THEIR NOT BEING CONSERVATIVE BECAUSE OF THEIR TATTOOS AND PIERCINGS, COMPLAINED THEY WERE UNNATURAL MUTANTS BECAUSE A LOT OF THEM HAD PURPLE EYES AND SIX FINGERS ON EACH HAND, COMPLAINED THEIR COBALT BLUE ROBES WERE UGLY AND SAID THEIR LACK OF PRAYER MEANT THEY HAD NO MORALS!

SO IT DOESN'T HAVE THAT PLETHORA COUNCIL YOU TALKED ABOUT WITH BRIAN, AND IT OVERLAPS WITH DISCORDIANISM?

IT'S THE PLEROMA COUNCIL, AND IT ONLY OVERLAPS WITH DISCORDIANISM IN SOME ABSURDIST VIEWS.



I ALSO REMEMBER BECAUSE HE SAID THERE WAS NO POINT IN HAVING A GOD UNLESS YOU COULD CURRY FAVOR WITH HIM AND MAKE HIM DO WHAT YOU WANTED. THE PROBLEM WAS AN ATHEIST HAD GOTTEN ON TV A FEW WEEKS BEFORE AND SAID THE EXACT SAME THING, AND HE'D RANTED THEN ABOUT HOW THE ATHEIST WAS COMPLETELY WRONG. I POINTED THAT OUT, AND HE DID THE "IT'S NOT THE SAME THING!" BIT AND GROUNDED ME FOR A WEEK FOR CONTRADICTING HIM.

THE TIGHMANITES HAVE A FAIR AMOUNT OF LITERATURE ABOUT PEOPLE WHO HAVE GODS ONLY TO TREAT THEM LIKE SLAVES WHILE CALLING THEM FRIENDS ODDLY ENOUGH AND IF MY BROTHER THINKS THE TIGHMANITES ARE MUTANTS, HE SHOULD TAKE A LOOK AT THE LAUWINSTS SOMETIME!

ANYWAY, AFTER THE DOCTOR LIED THAT HER CONCERNES WERE ALL IN HER HEAD AND LEFT THE NURSES SAID HE WAS JUST "TELLING IT LIKE IT IS" THE SONG DOESN'T MENTION THAT THE BIG FOUR HAD ALL THEIR NURSES LICKING THEIR BOOTS AND THEN SHE ENDED UP IN THE WORST PLACE OF ALL.

MY CLIENT OBJECTED TO THE DOCTOR'S BEHAVIOR, BUT HE COULDN'T OBJECT TOO STRONGLY, OR HE'D BEEN KICKED OUT OF THE HOSPITAL FOR AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR.



IS THIS WHERE THE TORTURE PART COMES IN? ASIDE FROM THE HOURLONG TANTRUM DOCTOR WHO FILLED HER PRESCRIPTION ONCE AND NEVER AGAIN, WHO WAS BASICALLY TWISTING THE KNIFE?



SINCE WHEN DO ATHEISTS GET ON TV?

DAD SOMETIMES LIKES TO WATCH THE "NON CONSERVATIVE VIEWS AND WHY THEY'RE WRONG" SHOW SO HE CAN FEEL VINDICATED.

BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY, IF HE'S SO SURE OF HIS VIEWS, HE NEEDS TO HAVE THEM CONSTANTLY REINFORCED.

NEITHER DO I

LAO SOMETHINGS? ARE THEY ANOTHER GROUP OF HUMANS FROM ANOTHER REALITY? HOW MANY REFUGEES FROM OTHER REALITIES ARE THERE?



MORE THAN YOU KNOW, AND IT'S TOO LONG OF A STORY TO TELL HERE AND NOW TO GET BACK TO THE SO-CALLED DOCTOR BUSINESS, MY CLIENT WAS A CONVERT TO TIGHMANISM, AND HIS MATE WAS A MALCHICKENIST

EXACTLY HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF THE AHEM, JOKE ABOUT WHY THE BUTT VICEROY IS CALLED THE OLD TRINITY?

NO ..

CALVIN WHAT'S THAT? MAX MALCHICKENISM IS THE BELIEF THAT THE CHICKEN IS THE ONE GOD, BUT HE'S AN EVIL SLAVEOWNER AND NOT WORTHY OF WORSHIP. BOTH HIS BELIEFS AND HERS OFFENDED THE DOCTORS WHO WERE GOOD CHICKENISTS (OR PRETENDING TO BE AT THE TIME), BUT WEREN'T OFFENSIVE ENOUGH TO GAIN THEM ANY REAL POINTS IN THE LOCAL LIBERTY TOWN. SARANNA AND, LIKE ALL LIBERTY TOWNS, IT ONLY EXISTS BECAUSE THE CHICKEN PERMITS IT REGARDLESS OF HOW FREE THEIR RESIDENTS THINK THEY ARE. MAX IT'S IRONIC, YES

MAX BECAUSE THE NEW TRINITY IS INSURANCE, DOCTORS, AND REHAB/NURSING HOMES. INSURANCE SAYS NO TO EVERYTHING WITHOUT SEEING YOU PERSONALLY. DOCTORS SAY NO TO EVERYTHING WHILE SEEING YOU PERSONALLY, AND REHAB/NURSING HOMES SAY NO TO EVERYTHING WHILE KEEPING YOU PERSONALLY LOCKED UP. THE LAST IS WHERE SHE ENDED UP.

CALVIN WHY IS INSURANCE IMPORTANT?

MAX BECAUSE WITHOUT INSURANCE, YOU CAN'T PAY FOR ANYTHING UNLESS YOU'RE RICH. SARANNA, BUT IF DOCTORS SAY NO TO EVERYTHING EVEN WHEN YOU HAVE INSURANCE AND CAN PAY THEM, WHY DOES INSURANCE MATTER AT ALL?

MAX ONLY THE CHICKEN KNOWS!

HOW COULD THINGS GET WORSE? I GUESS THE SONG LEFT EVEN MORE OUT?



AFTER THE SO-CALLED DOCTOR WAS AGGRESSIVE ENOUGH TO THROW A FIT OVER HAVING TO KEEP DOING WHAT HE WAS PAID TO DO?



RIGHT, IF HE'D CHANNELLED THAT AGGRESSION TOWARDS DOING HIS JOB HIS PATIENTS WOULD BE MUCH BETTER OFF, BUT YOU COULD SAY THAT ABOUT ALL THE BIG FOUR ONLY THE CHICKEN COULD FORCE THEM TO DO WELL, AND HE WOULDN'T DO THAT FOR NON-RICH OR HERETICS

DID YOU HAVE TO GO THROUGH ANYTHING LIKE THIS, TOO?

...YES, BUT NOT FOR LONG. MY PART IN THIS STORY'S COMING RIGHT UP.

WHAT A NIGHTMARE!

SARANNA WHAT ABOUT DOCTORS BELOW THE BIG FOUR? WAS THERE ANY WAY TO MAKE THEM DO THEIR JOBS OR TO REMOVE THEM IF YOU COULDN'T?

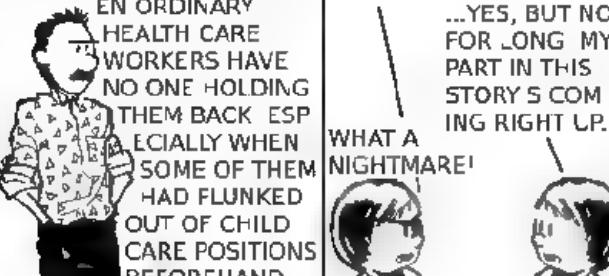
MAX YOU COULD REMOVE ONE IF A NURSE OF THEIRS DEVELOPED A CONSCIENCE AND TURNED THEM IN, BUT THAT WAS SO RARE IT MIGHT AS WELL HAVE BEEN WINNING THE LOTTERY. MY CLIENT'S MATE DID HAVE A FEW GOOD ONES HELPING HER WITH SOME PARTS OF ARIENFLORB, BUT IT DIDN'T AMOUNT TO MUCH. WITH ONE OF THE BIG FOUR AROUND TO OVERRIDE THEM, AND THE REHAB/NURSING HOME DIDN'T HELP AT ALL.

INDEED THE FACILITY HAD TO HAVE A DOCTOR IN CHARGE, AND IT'S FUNNY THAT YOU BRING UP THAT MEMBER OF THE BIG FOUR SHE WAS THE ONE.

LIKE THAT ISN'T OMINOUS!

YES, WHICH IS WHY I'LL BE CUTTING THIS PART SHORT. YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENS WHEN EVEN ORDINARY

HEALTH CARE WORKERS HAVE NO ONE HOLDING THEM BACK, ESPECIALLY WHEN SOME OF THEM HAD FLUNKED OUT OF CHILD CARE POSITIONS BEFOREHAND



IT WASN'T THAT BAD AT FIRST SHE HAD BETTER RESULTS WITH THE PHYSICAL THERAPY THERE, AND SHE'D HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GO HOME AND GET THERAPY IF SHE HAD MY CLIENT COULD GET INTO DISABLED FRIENDLY HOUSING FIRST, OR AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT THE DOCTOR SAID MAKE OF THAT WHAT YOU'LL.

THERE WAS A BROUHAHA WITH TRYING TO GET THE FACILITY TO ACTUALLY PROVIDE A LIST OF THE MEDICATIONS THEY WERE GIVING MY CLIENT'S MATE. THAT WAS A SIGN OF THINGS TO COME. FIRST, PHYSICAL THERAPY WAS KEEPING HER STRENGTH UP. BJT HER INSURANCE DECIDED SHE WASN'T PROGRESSING FAST ENOUGH.

THEY HAD AS MUCH CARE FOR KEEPING THE PLAGUE OUT AS THEY DID FOR HELPING THEIR PATIENTS IN GENERAL.

AT LEAST DOCTORS AND INSURANCE HAVE TO KEEP UP THE APPEARANCE OF DOING SOMETHING!

YES, EVEN THOUGH A LOT OF THEM HATE IT

MY CLIENT TELLED ME IN ON WHAT HAPPENED. AT THAT POINT, THE ARJENFLORB SYNDROME HAD WEAKENED HIS MATE'S ARMS SIGNIFICANTLY, WHICH WAS A BAD SIGN ON TOP OF THE PLAGUE, BUT SHE TOLD HIM SHE'D CONTACT HIM WHEN IT WAS SAFE TO COME BACK. A WEEK AND A HALF LATER, HE GOT A PHONE CALL...

SO IT'S LIKE THAT MOVIE I OVERHEARD MOM WATCHING BEHIND DAD'S BACK ONCE, ABOUT THE DEAD GUY BROUGHT BACK BY A BIRD TO AVENGE BOTH HIS AND HIS GIRLFRIEND'S DEATH? OR AT LEAST THE ONE PART NEAR THE END?

FROM WHAT YOU'VE POINTED OUT, IT WAS PROBABLY A WAY TO TWIST THE KNIFE AGAIN. HOW LONG WERE THE TANTRUMS SHE THREW THIS TIME?



SO THEY CUT HER OFF, SO SHE COULDN'T PROGRESS AT ALL ANYMORE? YIKES!



AS GRANDMA SAID THE LAST TIME SHE VISITED, THAT'S BOVINE SCATOLOGY!

HOLY CATS, THAT IS BOVINE SCATOLOGY!

GIVEN YOUR EXPRESSION, I'M GUESsing SOMETHING ELSE WENT WRONG? I DON'T EVEN KNOW THIS PERSON, BUT IF MY SISTER HAD TO GO THROUGH A FASTER VERSION OF WHAT SHE DID, SHE HAS MY SYMPATHY!

DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.

"I HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU. DON'T WANT IT ANYMORE. THIRTY HOURS OF PAIN, ALL AT ONCE."

ACTUALLY, SHE DIDN'T THROW ANY THIS TIME, AND SEEMED TO BE IN A BETTER MOOD. OF COURSE, SHE WAS ONLY AT THE FACILITY EVERY FEW WEEKS, AND IT'D BEEN A FEW YEARS SINCE SHE'D HAD MY CLIENT'S MATE AS A PATIENT, SO SHE LIKELY FORGOT SOME THINGS

YES AND HER MEDICATIONS DIDN'T HELP HER THAT MUCH. SHE WAS EITHER PASSING OUT RATHER DOMLY OR STILL UNABLE TO KEEP FOOD DOWN, EVEN THOUGH THE MEDICATIONS WERE SUPPOSED TO FIX THAT

SOMEONE ELSE HAD TO FILL IN FOR ME THAT WEEK, AS I D SHUFFLED MY SCHEDULE AROUND FOR THE MISSION TO RESCUE THE MAGUS AND THE OTHER REFUGEES. THAT TIME IS WHEN EVERYTHING REALLY FELL APART

BUT WHY THIS STORY FIRST? IT HASN'T TAKEN AS LONG AS THE KRALTAIR STORY, AND IT'S INTERESTING IN A COMPLETELY HORRIFYING WAY.

IT HAS TO BE IN THE RIGHT ORDER. SUSIE KNOWS WHY

WHAT'S THAT SAYING? THE AXE FORGETS, BUT THE TREE REMEMBERS? AND WAS YOUR CLIENT'S MATE SUPPOSED TO BE GRATEFUL THAT SHE WAS IN A GOOD ENOUGH MOOD TO ACT LIKE A PROFESSIONAL?

YES, AND APPARENTLY SO

SOUNDS LIKE THE HOSPITAL, IN THAT THEY DIDN'T CARE IF SHE GOT BETTER AS LONG AS THEY GOT PAID.

EXACTLY AND THEN THERE WAS THE PLAGUE OUTBREAK THAT SPREAD UNCHECKED!

WHAT?!

MAX MY CLIENT WAS VISITING HIS MATE IN THE FACILITY ONCE A WEEK IN ORDER TO KEEP THEIR HOUSING, BUT THE ISSUES CAUSED BY THE SUPPOSED TREATMENTS THEY WERE GIVING HER THREW THAT SCHEDULE OFF. THEY'D HAD NO LUCK FINDING DISABLED-FRIENDLY HOUSING BUT BEING UNDERPRIVILEGED IN A LIBERTY TOWN VIRTUALLY ENSURED THAT, AFTER NOT HEARING FROM HER FOR LONG ENOUGH, HE VISITED ANYWAY. FUNNLY HOW HE GOT A MASK AND GOWN TO KEEP FROM CATCHING THE PLAGUE, BUT SHE DIDN'T CALVIN *SPEECHLESS*. SARANNA DARE I ASK HOW THIS ENDS? MAX NOT WELL.

SOMETHING I'VE LEARNED FROM THE LIBRARIES HERE IS THAT IDENTICAL TWINS CAN SHARE MEMORIES, BUT IT'S INSTANTANEOUS, AND THERE ARE MAJOR RISKS INVOLVED IF YOU'RE NOT PREPARED. TELLING YOU ALL THIS BEFOREHAND COUNTS AS BEING PREPARED, AND CALVIN NEEDS TO KNOW IT, TOO

MAX AS FOR DEATH THAT'S WHAT THE PHONE CALL TO MY CLIENT WAS ABOUT AN HOUR AFTER THE FACILITY'S USUAL CHECKUP OR SO THEY SAID. THEY FOUND HER UNRESPONSIVE AND ASKED HIM WHETHER THEY SHOULD TRY CPR. HE AGREED. THEY CALLED AGAIN IN A BIT SAYING THEY COULDN'T REVIVE HER. SARANNA AT LEAST SHE WASN'T SUFFERING ANYMORE. MAX NOT SO FAST. THE CHICKEN'S SYSTEM WASN'T DONE WITH THEM YET. WHEN I SHOWED UP FOR MY JOB WITH HIM THE NEXT DAY, I HAD TO HELP HIM SORT THINGS OUT, BUT GOOD CHICKENISTS NEVER PASS UP OPPORTUNITIES TO HURT HERETICS! I KNEW THAT INTELLECTUALLY BUT SEEING IT WAS DIFFERENT.



SO THE CHICKEN'S MEDICAL SYSTEM, FROM DOCTORS TO INSURANCE TO REHAB/NURSING HOMES, IS DESIGNED TO MAKE SURE ONLY HIS PREFERRED PEOPLE GET GOOD HEALTH CARE WHENEVER POSSIBLE. I GET THAT BUT WHAT IN THE NAME OF SAINT GULIK COULD THEY DO AFTER ALL THAT?

WHEN I TOOK MY CLIENT OVER TO THE REHAB/NURSING HOME FACILITY (AFTER THEY REMOVED HER BODY) IN ORDER TO GET HER THINGS, EXPECTED HIM TO BE IN SHOCK HE WAS, BUT NOT FOR THE REASONS I THOUGHT, ACCORDING TO HIM, ALL OF HER THINGS WERE IN THE EXACT SAME POSITIONS THAT THEY WERE IN A WEEK AND A HALF BEFORE, WHEN HE SAW HER LAST!

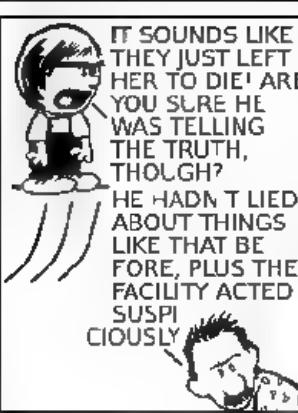
SHE SAID MY CLIENT'S MATE DIDN'T HAVE THE CONDITION THEN AGAIN, SHE WAS ONE OF THE BIG FOUR, SO CHOOSING BETWEEN "DO WORK AND STERILIZE THE HERETIC" AND "DO NOT LET THE HERETIC DIE" WAS A NO BRAINER. THE SECOND GIVEN THAT SHE ALSO SIGNED THE DEATH CERTIFICATE LATER, IT ALSO FITS

MY CLIENT WAS POOR AND (I HATE TO USE THIS PHRASE, BUT IT APPLIES) VISIBLY DISABLED. HE'D NEVER BEEN ABLE TO COME OFF AS THREATENING IN HIS LIFE, MUCH LESS HIRE ANYONE TO MAKE THREATS FOR HIM WITHOUT PUTTING HIM AT RISK. THE IDEA OF HIS SUCCESSFULLY THREATENING THE CHICKENISTS WAS A JOKE.

THE SAME COULD APPLY TO HIS MATE. ALL THEY HAD WERE EACH OTHER. THE HOUSING THEY WERE IN HAD THE PAPERWORK IN HER NAME, BUT SHE'D SET THINGS UP SO THAT IF SOMETHING HAPPENED TO HER, HE COULD KEEP ON LIVING THERE. BUT THAT WEAK POINT WAS WHAT THE CHICKENISTS LEANED ON



I'M NOT FAMILIAR WITH THAT SAINT ERIS DISCORDIA'S MESSANGER, A.K.A. HERMES OR MERCURY. IT TURNS OUT HE ISN'T THE GOD OF FLOWERS AND BOUQUETS!

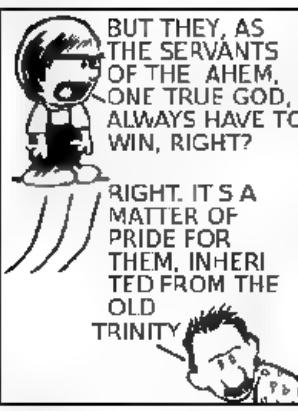


IT SOUNDS LIKE THEY JUST LEFT HER TO DIE! ARE YOU SURE HE WAS TELLING THE TRUTH, THOUGH?

HE HADN'T LIED ABOUT THINGS LIKE THAT BEFORE, PLUS THE FACILITY ACTED SUSPICIOUSLY.



SO WHAT HAPPENED NEXT? YOU SAID THE CHICKENISTS DID WORSE, BUT THEY HAVE NO AUTHORITY IN LIBERTY TOWNS YOU SAID!



BUT THEY, AS THE SERVANTS OF THE AHEM, ONE TRUE GOD, ALWAYS HAVE TO WIN, RIGHT?

RIGHT. IT'S A MATTER OF PRIDE FOR THEM, INHERITED FROM THE OLD TRINITY.



THEY DID SOMETHING TO BREAK THAT?

THEY HAD THE RULES CHANGED IN THE NAME OF "EFFICIENCY," SO HE NO LONGER QUAILED IF SHE WASN'T THERE.



HE HELPS TAKE THE DEAD WHERE THEY NEED TO GO, AND HE'S NOW IN THE FORM OF A ROACH, SO HE'S A WEIRD BUG!

SO YOU FINALLY LEARNED ABOUT MERCURY, LONG AFTER WE HAD TO DO THAT REPORT ON IT! HAH!

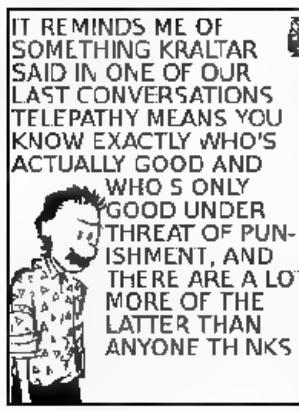


WHEN WE WENT TO GET HER DEATH CERTIFICATE FOR THE BUREAUJ CRACY, IT LISTED HER CAUSE OF DEATH AS "FAILURE TO THRIVE."

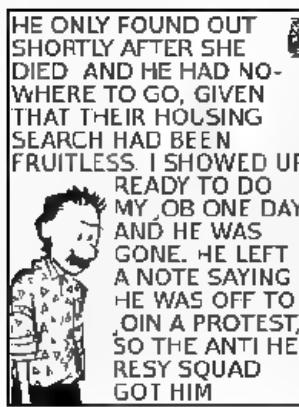
ANYONE WHO'D SEEN HER, AS I HAD WHEN TAKING MY CLIENT TO VISIT HER, COULD SEE IT WAS A COP OUT BECAUSE SHE WAS A HERETIC



MY CLIENT'S BEING A MEMBER OF A RELIGION FROM ANOTHER REALITY WAS BAD ENOUGH, BUT THEY THOUGHT HE MIGHT PUSH BACK AGAINST THE SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES THIS MATE DIED UNDER.



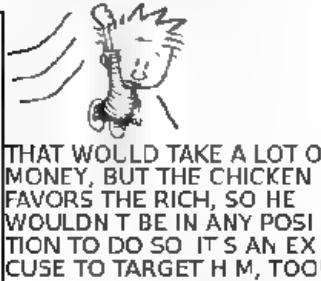
IT REMINDS ME OF SOMETHING KRALTAH SAID IN ONE OF OUR LAST CONVERSATIONS. TELEPATHY MEANS YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHO'S ACTUALLY GOOD AND WHO'S ONLY GOOD UNDER THREAT OF PUNISHMENT, AND THERE ARE A LOT MORE OF THE LATTER THAN ANYONE THINKS.



HE ONLY FOUND OUT SHORTLY AFTER SHE DIED AND HE HAD NOWHERE TO GO, GIVEN THAT THEIR HOUSING SEARCH HAD BEEN FRUITLESS. I SHOWED UP READY TO DO MY OB ONE DAY, AND HE WAS GONE. HE LEFT A NOTE SAYING HE WAS OFF TO JOIN A PROTEST, SO THE ANTI HERESY SQUAD GOT HIM

IT'S STILL GOOD TO FILL IN THE GAPS IN MY KNOWLEDGE, AND WITH SOMETHING NON-CHICKEN RELATED.

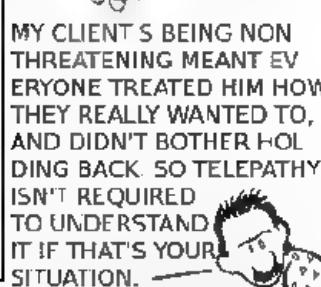
THERE'S ALSO SAINT LAUWIN, THE FOUNDER AND CLONE SEED OF THE LAUWINISTS. BUT LET ME WRAP UP THIS SORRY TALE.



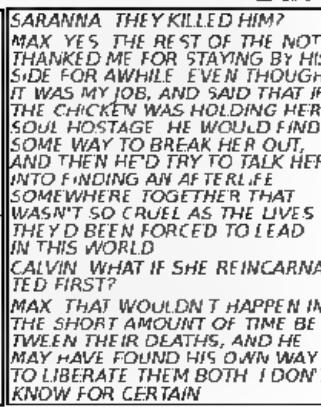
THAT WOULD TAKE A LOT OF MONEY, BUT THE CHICKEN FAVORS THE RICH, SO HE WOULDN'T BE IN ANY POSITION TO DO SO. IT'S AN EXCUSE TO TARGET HIM, TOO!



NOW YOU'RE GETTING IT!



MY CLIENT'S BEING NON-THREATENING MEANT EVERYONE TREATED HIM HOW THEY REALLY WANTED TO, AND DIDN'T BOTHER HOLDING BACK. SO TELEPATHY ISN'T REQUIRED TO UNDERSTAND IT IF THAT'S YOUR SITUATION.



SARANNA, THEY KILLED HIM? MAX YES. THE REST OF THE NOTE THANKED ME FOR STAYING BY HIS SIDE FOR A WHILE, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS MY JOB, AND SAID THAT IF THE CHICKEN WAS HOLDING HER SOUL HOSTAGE, HE WOULD FIND SOME WAY TO BREAK HER OUT, AND THEN HE'D TRY TO TALK HER INTO FINDING AN AFTERLIFE SOMEWHERE TOGETHER THAT WASN'T SO CRUEL AS THE LIVES THEY'D BEEN FORCED TO LEAD IN THIS WORLD.

CALVIN, WHAT IF SHE REINCARNATED FIRST? MAX THAT WOULDN'T HAPPEN IN THE SHORT AMOUNT OF TIME BETWEEN THEIR DEATHS, AND HE MAY HAVE FOUND HIS OWN WAY TO LIBERATE THEM BOTH. I DON'T KNOW FOR CERTAIN.

THAT WAS THE FIRST STEP, IT TURNED OUT, THAT LED TO MY DEATH AS I TOLD KRALTAIR. I WAS WORRIED THAT YOU, CALVIN, WOULD BE CONSIDERED A HERETIC AND END UP DESTROYED

AT EVERY TURN BY THE CHICKEN'S SYSTEM AND WHAT CONVINCED ME OF IT WAS MY REPLACEMENT CLIENT

ALSO, LOOKING BACK, I PANICKED BUT I'D JUST SEEN THE CHICKEN'S FULL SYSTEM IN ACTION THAT'S WHY I TOLD YOU THAT STORY IN GR M DETAIL. YOU NEED TO KNOW WHAT

YOU'RE GOING TO BE FIGHTING AGAINST IN FULL, REGARDLESS OF ANY PROPHECY

ALSO, THE RATES OF DISEASES LIKE ARJENFLORB SYNDROME HAVE GONE WAY DOWN, SO THERE ISN'T MUCH BEGGING!

WHERE'D YOU HEAR THAT THEY WENT DOWN? AND HAVE YOU USED YOUR EYE TO CHECK?

AND HERE I WAS, THINKING THAT SOMETHING WAS GOING RIGHT AND NOT CHECKING IT OUT!

SINCE YOU'VE BEEN LOCKED IN A DUNGEON FOR A LONG TIME, I CAN'T BLAME YOU FOR THAT

TO GET ENOUGH POWER TO TURN THE OLD TRINITY INTO HIS BUTT VICEROY, THE CHICKEN DRAINED SOME SPIRITUAL ENERGY FROM THIS REALITY TO KEEP IT OUT OF THE TRINITY'S HANDS. NOT ENOUGH TO BREAK IT LIKE BRIAN'S ORIGINAL REALITY, BUT ENOUGH TO BREAK THE TIMELINE. HERE SOME OF THE FUTURE BECAME THE PRESENT

WHAT, WAS SUSIE THE ONE?

NO, BUT I HAD ANOTHER CLIENT WHO ENDED UP IN THE SAME FACILITY THAT MY FORMER CLIENT'S MATE DID

I WAS LEERY ENOUGH I WAS ALSO FEELING A BIT GUITY ABOUT HOW I WAS FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO BE MAGICALLY HEALED FROM A POTENTIALLY FATAL WOUND JUST BECAUSE I'D MADE THE RIGHT FRIENDS, WHILE THESE PEOPLE HAD NO SUCH LUCK.

MAX BUT A FEW SESSIONS IN MY NEW CLIENT MENTIONED A KID BEING ADMITTED WHICH I THOUGHT WAS ODD. IMAGINE MY SURPRISE WHEN I FOUND OUT IT WAS SUSIE, WHOM I'D SEEN SOME OF THE LAST TIME I VISITED CALVIN AND THE REST OF MY BROTHER'S FAMILY AND SHE HAD ARJENFLORB SYNDROME TOO! SUSIE MAX FIGURED THAT IF THE CHICKEN HAD TARGETED ME WITH MY HERETIC SISTER, YOU, CALVIN, WOULD BE NEXT FOR BEING A POTENTIAL HERETIC YOURSELF. MAX IT GOT TO THE POINT, I COULDN'T SLEEP I HAD TO SEE FOR MYSELF HOW CALVIN WAS DOING REGARDLESS OF MY BROTHER'S LETTERS. I HAD A PLAN

HOW

COULD PEOPLE HAVE LET THINGS GET SO BAD? AND WITH THE CHICKEN GONE, WHO'S GOING TO MAKE SURE HIS REPLACEMENT ISN'T THE SAME?



IN ORDER I DON'T KNOW, AND THE PLE-ROMA COUNCIL HAS SOME PLANS TO AVOID IT, SINCE MOST OF THE MEMBERS HAVE BEEN OPPRESSED BY THE CHICKEN AND/OR HIS AGENTS THEMSELVES

AT LEAST THINGS IMPROVED AFTER THE BIG FOLR TURNED ON THE CHICKEN! DROPPING THE "TREATING PATIENTS" ACT AND OPENLY KILLING THEM FOR MONEY AT LEAST LED TO THE NEW SYSTEM WHERE BEGGING THE CHICKEN FOR HELP CAN GET HIM TO SHOW MERCY! NOT THAT IT'S GOOD BUT IT'S A NET IMPROVEMENT FOR THOSE WHO NEED MERCY!

ALL

THE REPORTED STATISTICS I COULD FIND SAY THE RATES STARTED GOING DOWN AFTER QUADPOOP DAY HAPPENED AND WAS MADE A NATIONAL HOLIDAY. I SHOULD CHECK. AAIIEEE!



LEAVING ASIDE THE HOLIDAY COMMEMORATING THE BIG FOUR'S BEING TURNED INTO POOP GHOSTS FOR THEIR CRIMES, WHICH MANY CAN APPRECIATE, YOU NOW SEE THAT THE CRIMES NEVER STOPPED? THAT THEY WERE JUST COVERED UP BETTER?

ARJENFLORB SYNDROME, ASTHMA, DIABETES, CEREBRAL PALSY ALL DISEASES THAT SIGNIFICANTLY CUT INTO PEOPLE'S ABILITY TO WORK! AND PEOPLE WITH THEM ARE NOW CALLED "USELESS EATERS" AND MASS KILLED IN SECRET EXCEPT FOR A FEW TOKEN CASES OF EACH! IS THERE NO END TO ALL THE SPILLED BLOOD?!

IF

HE WANTS EVERYONE TO WORK SO BADLY, WHY DOESN'T HE HELP TREAT THOSE DISEASES, OR AT LEAST KEEP THEM UNDER CONTROL? THEY COULD WORK WITH THE RIGHT HELP! WHY KILL THEM INSTEAD?

TIME SPENT HAVING THOSE CONDITIONS TREATED OR KEPT UNDER CONTROL IS TIME NOT SPENT WORKING. THE CHICKEN OBJECTED TO HIS UNDERLINGS MASS MURDER UNTIL HE ENGAGED IN IT HIMSELF AFTER HE KILLED THEM. THEN HE CHANGED HIS MIND. ONE OF OUR ANCIENT BUILDERS HAD CEREBRAL PALSY, SO THE ODDS OF MY PEOPLE'S BEING BUILT IN YOUR REALITY ARE NOW NEGIGLIGIBLE.

THERE'S ALSO GENETIC ENGINEERING THAT COULD TREAT MANY OF THEM, BUT THE CHICKEN PREFERS TO ONLY USE IT ON PEOPLE HE DEEMS WORTHY. WHEN WE CHANGED FROM THE OLD TRINITY TO THE CHICKEN, THAT WAS ONE OF MANY THINGS I SUDDENLY KNEW ABOUT WHEN I DIDN'T BEFORE! WHY'S THAT?

MAX

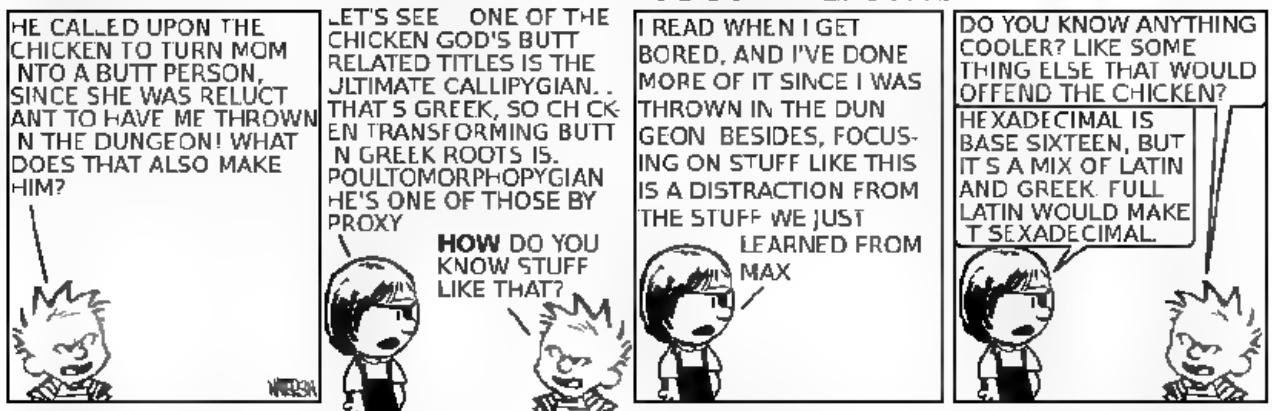
THERE WAS OTHER DAMAGE THAT THE OMNI TIME WARRIORS WERE ABLE TO FIX, BUT THAT'S ANOTHER REASON WHY THE OMNI HATE THE CHICKEN SO MUCH. TIFFANY RANTED ABOUT IT ONCE CALVIN THAT EXPLAINS SO MUCH

THIS EASY LISTENING MUZAK REALLY OFFENDS MOM AND DAD. WAIT, WHY AM I NOT PLAYING SPEEDCORE DUBSTEP MUSIC INSTEAD?

RIGHT. THE FLYING SPAGHETTI MONSTER, THE KIND OF ADVANCED GENETIC ENGINEERING THAT CAN FIX SO MANY MORE MEDICAL PROBLEMS (IF YOU CAN AFFORD IT), SO MANY NEW MUSIC GENRES. THEY'RE ALL FROM YEARS IN THE FUTURE!

ADD IN THE STUFF FROM OTHER REALITIES WHERE THINGS ARE DIFFERENT ENOUGH, AND.

I PREFER TO CALL IT INFINITE POSSIBILITIES, THOUGH SOME CALL IT A MUDDED MESS IT HELPS JS HERE.



BTW I'M GETTING AHEAD OF MYSELF AGAIN IN THE NINE DAYS I HAD TO WAIT, I RAN INTO SUSIE'S PARENTS WHEN I TOOK MY NEW CLIENT TO THE FACILITY, AND THEY RECOGNIZED ME.

THEY MENTIONED OFFHAND THAT ALL THEIR ATTEMPTS TO GET THE CHICKEN TO SPARE AT LEAST ONE OF THEIR DAUGHTERS WERE FOR NAUGHT.

IT'S NOT AN IMPROMPTU VISIT. HE REALLY DISLIKES THOSE, AND IT WOULD BE MORE SUSPICIOUS TO MAKE ONE. I SENT HIM A LETTER A FEW DAYS AGO.

SPATIAL MATRIX HAS STABILIZED DISENGAGING FTL, ENTERING HOVER MODE

GOOD!

THE TELESCANNER DETECTS NO LIVING BEINGS WITH HOSTILE INTENT WE SHOULD BE SAFE

MOVING TO THE EDGE OF THE RAVINE ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE HOUSE

MAX, DO NOT MOVE THE SHIP HAS TAKEN DAMAGE, AND I WILL MAKE AN EMERGENCY LANDING WITH THE AUTOMATIC CONTROLS. THE MEDICAL ANALYZER WILL TELL ME HOW BADLY YOU'RE INJURED

UUHH...

FORGET MY DISGUISE. WE HAVE LOST THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE

AND THAT'S HOW HE FIRST FOUND OUT I EXISTED! THAT ONE CONVERSATION!

EXACTLY! THEY CARED ONLY FOR APPEARANCES! AND LOOK WHAT IT GOT THEM!

THE DAY BEFORE THE TRIP, THERE WAS TALK THAT SUSIE'D TAKEN A TURN FOR THE WORSE

SHE WAS JUST A KID, AFTER ALL IT WORRIED ME MORE, BUT I HELD UP IT WASN'T JUST TALK, EITHER IT LASTED A WEEK.

MAX, WHICH MEANS SHE LIVED LONGER THAN I DID, BY ABOUT SIX DAYS. THE TRIP STARTED OUT AS EXPECTED.

LIFTOFF ACHIEVED. FULL STEALTH MODE ENGAGED

YOU'RE CERTAIN YOUR BROTHER CAN HANDLE AN IMPROMPTU VISIT?

MAX AND WE WERE OFF!

BWEGZORRRM!



YOU KNOW HIM BEST. I'LL STILL PUT ON MY HUMAN DISGUISE NOW, BEFORE YOU TURN ON FTL.

LIKE ONE OF CALVIN'S SCHOOL TEACHERS

ADJUSTING HOW DO I LOOK?

SINCE I'M TRYING TO EVOKE CONCERN INSTEAD OF FEAR, THAT IS GOOD, YES? HOPE THIS WORKS EN GAGING FTL.

TO DOUBLE CHECK THE PLAN I AM IN DISGUISE FOR CHICKEN THOSE WHO FOLLOW THE CHICKEN, BUT MAY NOT BE HIS AGENTS.

AND FOR ANY HERE TICS IF CHICKEN AGENTS SCREAM ABOUT A LIZARD PERSON HERE...

THEY WILL NOT BE SEEN AS CREDIBLE AND DESPITE OUR LACK OF AN ACTUAL TELEPATH, THE PROTOTYPE TELESCANNER CAN DETECT HOSTILITY.

I WISH ONE HAD BEEN AVAILABLE, BUT IF THE DEVICE WILL SERVE...

FOR OUR PURPOSES, IT WILL. UNLESS SOMETHING HAPPENS THAT IS BEYOND ALL EXPECTATION

I'D ACCUSE YOU OF JINXING THINGS, BUT I'VE HAD TO REDEFINE EXPECTATION A LOT SINCE MEETING YOUR KIND

SMOO! FLARK! SMOOFLARK!

ZAP

BROTHER MAX DETECTED. DNA AND TELEPATHIC SCANS FAILED. PURITY TEST PURIFYING NOW.

MAX I'D NEVER HEARD KRALTA SWEAR BEFORE, OR SINCE

REMIND ME AGAIN, WHY DOES YOUR BROTHER LIVE NEAR BOTH A RAVINE AND A DUNGEON? THE LATTER FITS HIS FANATICISM, BUT THE FORMER? THE RAVINE WAS THERE?

IT'S BROAD DAYLIGHT ON A SATURDAY YOUR NEPHEW SHOULD BE HOME, YES? I DON'T SEE HIM ANYWHERE THAT IS ODD.

NO ONE HAS A CELESTIAL BIRD PURIFIER ANY MORE! ESPECIALLY OUTSIDE THE MILITARY! IT'S A WAR CRIME TO USE ONE!

RECORDED MESSAGE BEGINS

"MAX, IF YOU'RE HEARING THIS, YOU'VE CORRUPTED YOURSELF AND TRIED TO SPREAD THAT CORRUPTION TO MY SON, WHICH I WILL NOT PERMIT. I WARNED YOU THESE ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR ACTIONS." MESSAGE ENDS

HOW MANY BLEEDING HOLES DO I HAVE NOW?!
CENSORED: YOU DON'T WANT TO SEE THESE

IT WAS AT MAXIMUM SETTING! YOUR WOUNDS ARE BEING HELD OPEN WITH CELESTIAL POWER! I COULD COUNTERACT IT AND PATCH THEM UP UNTIL WE COULD REACH A REAL HEALER, BUT THERE ARE SO MANY THAT THERE'S NO TIME. YOUR BROTHER'S BOON FROM THE CHICKEN HAS, UNFORTUNATELY, SUCCEEDED ALL TOO WELL!

NO T ME? THE FTL
COULD TAKE US
THERE INSTANTLY

THE PURIFIER S BEAM
WENT THROUGH THE
ENGINE COMPART-
MENT. IT'S TOO RISKY
THE CH CHKEN HAS
LIKELY BEEN
ALERTED
TOO

SO WHAT
NOW?

ONLY THE CHICKEN CAN
MAKE SILENCED GHOSTS,
AND ONLY IN PERSON?

ALL OUR INTELLIGENCE
SAYS SO. IT LIMITS HIS
POWER, MUCH LIKE
HOW HE CAN ONLY
TURN MORTALS INTO
BUTT PEOPLE
WITHOUT
HELP

THEN I KNOW
WHAT TO DO.

YOU'LL BLEED OUT IN A
MATTER OF MINUTES,
UNLESS THE CH CHKEN OR
HIS AGENTS GET HERE
FASTER. THEY'LL ENSURE
WE'RE BOTH DEAD, AND
THE CHICKEN
WILL TURN US
BOTH INTO
SILENCED
GHOSTS OF
SOME TYPE. MOST
LIKELY POOP, HIS
FAVORITE

EAT ME.

EAT ME, AND
HIDE UNTIL
YOU CAN
POOP ME OUT
YOU'RE A CAR-
IN VORE, AND
WE KNOW
EACH OTHER
WELL EN-
OUGH

WHAT?!

WAIT DID THE MAGUS'
DIPLOMATIC OVERTURES
TO THE DUNGEON GO-
BLINS WORK OUT?

ONLY ENOUGH TO
LEARN THAT NONE
OF THEM WILLINGLY
SERVE THE
CHICKEN
THEY MIGHT
HELP YOU,
THEN!

KLAKRONNGG!

THE SHIP HAS
JUST CRASH-
LANDED, INTO
WHAT IS AP-
ARENTLY AN
UNDERGROUND
PART OF THE
DUNGEON
I SEE GOBLINS
THEY SURROUND
THE SHIP NOW.

GOOD! AS
FOR ME.

EVEN THOUGH IT
PAINS ME VERY
MUCH IF THAT'S
YOUR FINAL WISH, I
WILL DO IT. DO YOU
HAVE ANY SPIRITUAL
NEEDS BEFORE I
PROCEED?

I'LL SORT THOSE
OUT WHEN
GET TO THE
OTHER SIDE
SAVE ME AND
MAKE
ME YOUR
POOP

WHEN I FIRST ARRIVED IN
THE DUNGEON, THE CHICKEN
BRAGGED ABOUT TURNING
ALL MONOTHEISMS IN
TO POOP, BUT THEN HE
SAID YOU WERE ANOTHER'S
POOP SO HE WAS TELLING
THE TRUTH?

YES THE SHIP'S STEALTH
MODE WAS OFF DUE TO
DAMAGE, WHICH IS HOW
THE GOBLINS KNEW WE
WERE THERE. THEY OVER-
HEARD KRALTA'R'S AND
MY LAST CON-
VERSATION, SO
THEY WEREN'T
FAZED BY HIS
SLITTING MY
THROAT
WITH HIS
CLAWS

YOU SAID YOU HAD HIS
DNA, SO IT WAS BASIC-
ALLY CANNIBALISM,
RIGHT? I THINK THAT
CANNIBALISM OUGHT TO
BE GROUNDS FOR LENIENCY
IN MURDERS, SINCE
IT'S LESS WASTEFUL, BUT
NO ONE AT SCHOOL
WANTED TO DEBATE IT!

IT MAY HAVE BEEN CANNI-
BALISM, BUT IT WASN'T
MURDER. I WANTED TO DIE
BEFORE MY BROTHER'S
PLAN FOR ME WORKED. THE
IDEA THAT DYING ON YOUR
OWN TERMS IS MURDER IS

FROM THE OLD
TRINITY AND THE
CHICKEN. S'NCE
DEAD SLAVES
CAN NO LONGER
SERVE
THEIR MAS-
TERS!

BUT HOW
DID A PHOTO-
GRAPHER GET
THOSE PIC-
TURES AT ALL,
GIVEN THEIR
TMING
WOULD HAVE
TO BE PER-
FECT?

ONE OF
THOSE
GOOFY COIN-
CIDENCES,
I'D GUESS!

THAT EXPLAINS DAD'S
WEIRD BEHAVIOR IN THE
SUPERMARKET THAT ONE
TIME! HE COVERED UP THE
TABLOID HEADLINE IN THE
AISLE AND SAID IT WAS SO
INAPPROPRIATE THAT I
SHOULDN'T EVEN LOOK AT
IT, MUCH LESS READ IT!

LET ME GUESS
"MAN HAS UFO
AFFAIR WITH EL-
DERLY SCHOOL
TEACHER WHO
TURNS OUT TO
BE SHAPESHIF-
TING LI-
ZARD?"
YEP. LOOKED
IT UP LATER.

THE ONLY CLEAR
PICTURE WAS OF
MISS WORM
WOOD! ANYONE
WHO BROUGHT THAT
UP IN CLASS GOT
SENT TO THE
PRINCIPAL!
I ONLY HAD
THE ONE
PICTURE
THAT
KRALTA'R
COULD
HAVE
USED!

THE POINT IS, SHE MAY
HAVE HAD A KID WHO
COULD HAVE TAKEN YOUR
PART IN THE PROPHECY,
SINCE THEY WOULD BE RE-
LATED TO BOTH MY BRO-
THER AND ME AT THE TIME.
I WASN'T CERTAIN

BUT NOW
YOU ARE?

THERE'S ONE THING I DON'T
UNDERSTAND. IF I'M PART
OF THE PROPHECY, THEN
MY GETTING ARJENFLORB
SYNDROME AND ENDING
UP IN THE CHICKEN'S MASS-
MURDER FOR PROFIT SYS-
TEM WON'T HAPPEN. NOT
THAT I DON'T APPRECIATE
YOUR CONCERN FOR ME,
BUT WHAT'S THE DEAL?

CONSIDERING MY BRO-
THER NEVER TOLD YOU
HIS REAL NAME, DID HE
TELL YOU ABOUT OUR SISTER
WALBURGA?

THAT'S A "NO," THEN
SHE WAS THE YOUNGEST
OF US, AND WENT OFF
TO SEE THE WORLD AS
SOON AS SHE COULD.
ASIDE FROM A FEW POST-
CARDS, I HAVEN'T HEARD
MUCH FROM HER
FOR A WHILE,
AND IF YOU
THINK MY BRO-
THER AND I
CLASH, HE
CLASHES WITH
HER EVEN MORE.
IT'S ONE REASON
SHE LEFT

I DIDN'T STAY AROUND LONG AFTER BECOMING A GHOST, JUST IN CASE THE CHICKEN COULD DO SOME THING ELSE TO ME, AND BECAUSE MY LIBERATION MOVED ME TO THE FRONT

OF THE LINE FOR SPIRITUAL PROCESSING. TIFFANY ANSWERED A FEW OF MY QUESTIONS WHEN I FIRST ARRIVED, AND THAT CLEARED THNGS UP

MY BROTHER PROBABLY SET UP THAT PURIFIER TO BLAST HER, TOO, IF SHE CAME AROUND. AND WHO WOULD EXPECT TERROR WEAPON TECHNOLOGY FROM CELESTIAL BIRD PEOPLE TO BE IN

A NORMAL SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD? AND LOUIS WAIN, THE ARTIST, COULD APPARENTLY SEE ELDritch HORRORS IN OTHER REALITIES SOMEHOW

EXACTLY THEY BOTH WANTED TO BE DICTATORS, EVEN THOUGH ONE CLAIMED TO HAVE A YES CHICKEN WHILE THE OTHER DIDN'T. BUT THAT WASN'T ENOUGH. MELVILLE STARTED LOOKING INTO PSYCHOLOGY TO DIFFERENTIATE HIMSELF FROM YOUR DAD.

HOW, IF THEY'RE SO MUCH ALIKE?

ALSO, THE TERM "INSANE" IS ONLY USED BY LAWYERS, NOT PSYCHOLOGISTS. THE POINT IS THAT THE "RELIGION IS A MENTAL ILLNESS" ATHEISTS ARE JUST THE MIRROR OF THE CHICKEN'S "ANY VIEW OTHER THAN MINE IS A MENTAL ILLNESS." THEY TWIST RATIONALITY THE SAME WAY "WORK HARD AND YOU'LL MAKE IT" IS AN IRRATIONAL BELIEF. FOR EXAMPLE, IT ONLY GUARANTEES YOU'LL BE IGNORED OR GIVEN MORE WORK.

THAT WAS WHEN I FIRST MET HER, AND SHE'S BASICALLY THE SAME WAY NOW. SCARY (SINCE ONI ARE DEMONS, AFTER ALL), BUT FAIR WHEN SHE NEEDS TO BE. I WAS USHERED INTO THE "SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES" ROOM WITH A BUNCH OF OTHER NEW GHOSTS, AND IT WAS ONE BIG ROOM, LET ME TELL YOU!

MAX WALBURGA HAD ESCAPED TO ANOTHER REALITY WITH HUMANS IN IT. SHE'D HAD A FAMILY THERE, AND SHE HAD NO PLANS TO RETURN. SHE WAS DOING SOME ELDritch THINGS THERE INVOLVING CATS. TIFFANY'S COUNTERPART IN THAT REALITY KNEW WHY.

MY AUNT WALBURGA USED TO SAY THE STARS HELD EVIL BEINGS WHO WATCH OVER US AND BRING US TERMINAL CORRUPTION.

I'M SORRY, JON. I AM TERMINAL CORRUPTION.

DAD SAID ONCE THAT A LOT OF GREAT ARTISTS WERE INSANE. MAYBE THEIR ABILITY TO SEE THINGS DIFFERENTLY JUST MADE THEM SEEM THAT WAY?

ONLY LABEL'S MELVILLE GOT A PSYCHOLOGY DEGREE, BUT HE ONLY LEARNED HOW TO MANIPULATE PEOPLE AND REGURGITATED EVERYTHING ELSE TO PASS THE TESTS. YOUR DAD WOULD CALL PEOPLE HERETICS TO DISCREDIT THEM, WHILE MELVILLE WOULD CALL THEM MEN. TALLY LIT TO DISCREDIT THEM. DIFFERENT TERMINOLOGY, SAME RESULT.

BUT TO GET BACK ON TOPIC, GOOD THING THE MELVILLE TIMELINE WON'T BE COMING TO PASS.

ARE YOU SURE A PORTAL LEADING TO THAT TIMELINE WON'T SHOW UP SOMEWHERE?

WERE THEY ALL LIBERATED LIKE YOU? OR WERE THERE OTHERS, SINCE IT WASN'T THE "LIBERATED" ROOM?

JUDGING FROM THE TAGS WE HAD TO WEAR, THERE WERE A LOT OF DIFFERENT TYPES!

BE CAREFUL THROWING AROUND TERMS LIKE "INSANE" WHEN YOU'RE NOT QUALIFIED TO DO SO. MELVILLE DID THAT, AND YOU DON'T WANT TO FOLLOW IN HIS FOOTSTEPS AT ALL.

MY ALTERNATE FUTURE YOUNGER BROTHER?

PRETTY MUCH.

SOUNDS LIKE THE SO-CALLED DOCTORS A DEGREE THAT'S JUST A MAGIC AUTHORITY SYMBOL, SO EVERYONE HAS TO BELIEVE WHATEVER YOU SAY OR WRITE ON PAPERWORK, WHETHER IT'S TRUE OR NOT, AND WHETHER YOU ACTUALLY KNOW ANYTHING OR NOT.

VERY SURE. ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS I LEARNED AFTER I DIED WAS THAT MORE SIMILAR REALITIES ARE LESS LIKELY TO HAVE PORTALS BETWEEN THEM.

HOW DO YOU LEARN THAT?

SOME LIBERATED BY GNOSIS MY WAY OR ANOTHER WAY, SOME LIBERATED BY BEING PUT IN A DEFECTIVE ENOUGH FALSE FORM THAT THEY ESCAPED IT BY LUCK, SOME ATHEISTS WHO JUST LIVED THEIR LIVES AND LET THE GODS TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES, AND A FEW MEMBERS OF SOME THING CALLED DREMVALAAR'S WITNESSES.

APPARENTLY, THERE WAS AN EVIL DEMIURGE RULING THERE, TOO, AND IT HAD A WEAKNESS TO CATS. SHE USED ELDritch POWERS TO TAKE IT DOWN FOR GOOD.

I WONDER IF I'LL HAVE TO DO THAT FOR THIS REALITY!

AS OPPOSED TO DAD, WHO DOES THAT WHEN EVER THE CHICKEN ISN'T LOOKING CLOSELY ENOUGH.

YES, HIS CONFLICT WITH YOUR DAD STARTED WITH NOT WANTING TO SERVE ANY EVIL GODS, WHICH IS FINE, BUT HE EXTENDED IT TO NOT SERVING ANY GODS BECAUSE HE WANTED TO GIVE ORDERS INSTEAD OF TAKE THEM DIRECTLY.

ANYWAY, IT WAS A RARE 0% CHANCE THAT MELVILLE ACTUALLY BECAME A PSYCHOLOGIST, SO HIS DEGREE FELL OUT OF DATE, NO ONE TOOK HIM AS AN AUTHORITY ON ANYTHING, AND HE FINALLY TOOK HIS FRUSTRATIONS OUT ON YOUR DAD. THAT LED TO THEM BOTH KILLING EACH OTHER.

SOUNDS ABOUT RIGHT.

MAX TIFFANY MENTIONED IT WHEN SHE PROCESSED ME.

98% OF YOU IS OF ONE REALITY, AND 2% OF YOU IS OF ANOTHER. YOU GO TO WHAT YOU ARE A MAJORITY OF. AS FOR YOUR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, I WILL SEE! HMM

MAX WE WERE THERE A LONG TIME SO WE CHATTED WHILE EVERYONE WAS DEALT WITH ONE BY ONE. THE GODS OF THE PLEROMA COUNCIL MOSTLY HAVE NO QUARREL WITH THOSE KINDS OF ATHEISTS, AS LONG AS THEY DON'T ENGAGE IN CHICKEN THOUGHT BY TYING GODS' WORTHINESS TO THEIR WILLINGNESS TO OBEY OR DERS. SOME LIBERATED ONES TOLD ME OF THE VOWS THEY'D TAKEN. ONE SAID HE'D COME BACK IF THE CHICKEN BANNED SINGAPORE CHOW MAI FUN AND ANOTHER SAID SHE'D COME BACK IF THE CHICKEN BANNED PUTTING RED BEAN PASTE IN OATMEAL SO MANY FOOD RULES.

THE DREMVALAAR'S WITNESSES WERE TROUBLE. ONE OF THEM STARTED DOING A SERMON RIGHT THERE IN THE ROOM, AND THAT'S HOW THE TROUBLE BEGAN. DREMVALAAR WAS APPARENTLY A MONOTHEISTIC GOD OF ATHEISM. THEY WERE THE ONE TRUE GOD, AND WORSHIPPERS HAD TO HAVE PERFECT FAITH THAT THEY DIDN'T EXIST.

THAT MAKES NO SENSE AT ALL! IT MAKES EVEN LESS SENSE WHEN YOU KNOW ABOUT THE ONE SECTARIAN SPLITS! FOLLOWERS OF A NONEXISTENT GOD ARE SECTARIAN?! DREMVALAAR VERSUS POOP-DREMVALAAR!

IT WAS PARTIALLY THE CHICKEN'S FAULT. THE SPLIT WAS OVER WHETHER, WHEN THE CHICKEN ATE ALL THE MONOTHEISTIC GODS AND TURNED THEM INTO POOP, HE ALSO TURNED DREMVALAAR INTO POOP. THE REFORMED DREMVALAAR'S WITNESSES BELIEVED THE CHICKEN COULD DO IT, WHILE THE ORIGINALS DIDN'T.

CALVIN CAN AN OMNIPOTENT CHICKEN GOD TURN A GOD WHO DOESN'T EXIST INTO POOP? AND IF THE NONEXISTENT GOD IS THE ONE TRUE GOD, WHY WOULD HE ALLOW IT?

MAX IT WAS A TEST OF THE REFORMED ONES' FAITH, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT. THE TWO GROUPS GOT INTO A BRAWL AND AN ONI SECURITY GUARD FINALLY SHOWED UP, MAGICALLY PICKED THEM ALL UP, AND TOLD THEM HE WAS GOING TO SHOVE THEM ALL UP DREMVALAAR'S NONEXISTENT BUTTHOLE OF SCHRODINGER'S POOP IF THEY DIDN'T KNOCK IT OFF!

SARANNA BUTTHOLE OF SCHRODINGER'S POOP? WHAT'S THAT? MAX A BUTTHOLE THAT MAY OR MAY NOT BE MADE OUT OF POOP LONG STORY

ANYWAY, AS THE GUARD WAS LEAVING, ONE OF THE DW'S MADE A CRACK ABOUT HOW DREMVALAAR WAS A FALSE GOD WHO WAS DEAD AND IN HELL, BUT POOP DREMVALAAR WAS THE TRUE GOD WHO RULED FOREVER. SO THE GUARD TURNED AROUND, MAGICALLY PICKED THEM ALL UP AGAIN, AND TOLD THEM THEY'D BE MEETING DREMVALAAR PERSONALLY THEN HE LEFT WITH THEM.

SO THE LESSON IS, STAY AWAY FROM DW'S, AND DON'T TICK OFF ONI SECURITY GUARDS WHEN YOU'RE DEAD?

RIGHT, BUT LET ME GET TO THE IMPORTANT PART

MY PROCESSING WENT WELL. MY BEING PART OF A PROPHECY MEANT THAT CERTAIN SPIRITUAL LEADERS WITH VESTED INTERESTS IN THAT PROPHECY COULD REQUEST ACCESS TO ME. THAT WAS HOW I FIRST MET SHAMAN GHEFZARAL OF THE DUNGEON GOBLINS

DID HE HAVE TO SCRY YOU THROUGH FLAMES? I KNOW THAT'S SOMETHING HE DOES, ALTHOUGH I'VE ONLY SEEN HIM DO IT ONCE. IT'S NOT OFTEN SHOWN TO NON-CLERICS

I THINK SO! THERE WAS A YELLOWISH-ORANGE GLOW AROUND HIM WHEN WE FIRST SPOKE!

HE'D HAD A VISION FROM TIFFANY ABOUT THE PROPHECY AND WHO WAS INVOLVED IN IT, AND SHE POINTED HIM TO ME. WE MADE A DEAL TO KEEP IN CONTACT. I ASKED HIM IF HE KNEW WHAT HAPPENED TO KRALTAAR, BUT HE SAID THAT WAS A MATTER OF GOBLIN SECURITY AND REFUSED TO ELABORATE. I STILL WONDER WHAT HE MEANT.

AND SPEAKING OF WHAT HAPPENED TO PEOPLE, I'VE PUT OFF YOUR REUNION WITH YOUR SISTER LONG ENOUGH. OKAY, SINCE I THINK I'M PREPARED FOR IT BY NOW!

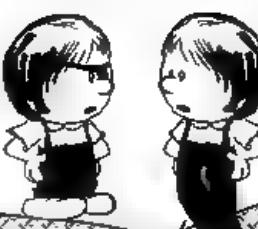
HOLD ON TO ME. EVEN WHEN YOU'RE PREPARED, IT'S A LOT TO TAKE IN. READY WHEN YOU ARE!

THERE ARE Dimensions WHERE EVERYONE IN A SPECIES CAN DO THIS, NOT JUST IDENTICAL TWINS. IT'S CALLED DREAMFASTING IN THOSE PLACES

I WONDER WHAT IT'S LIKE FOR THEM. I'M READY

INSIDE A SHARED MINDSCAPE

WHOAH! ABSORBING TEN YEARS WORTH OF MEMORIES AT ONCE IS A LOT! ALTHOUGH, GIVEN WHAT MAX JUST SAID ABOUT THE TIMELINE'S HAVING TO BE FIXED... IS THAT WHY WE'RE STILL KIDS INSTEAD OF TEEN AGERS RIGHT NOW?



YES. BUT SINCE I'M A GHOST, I ALSO DON'T AGE ANYMORE UNLESS I WANT TO, AND I DON'T WANT TO. YET THE EXACT CONVERSATION HAD WITH MAX SHOULD BE ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO. WE WERE BOTH GHOSTS THEN, WE WERE TALKING ABOUT HOW SOME OF THE HELLS WORKED, HE MENTIONED A HELL OF UNAGING, AND THAT WAS HOW IT CAME UP.

SARANNA-VISION: INTERESTING. I SENSE THAT SUSIE HAS DEEPER QUESTIONS. I WILL ANSWER THEM TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY, SINCE THEY INVOLVE BOTH SUSIE AND YOU.

I WONDER, WAS ONE OF THE DREAMS I HAD ACTUALLY A DREAM?

SARANNA-VISION: WHILE YOU PROCESS SUSIE'S MEMORIES, I WILL EXAMINE THIS SUPPOSED DREAM.

INSIDE SUSIE'S MAYBE DREAM

OH, MY HEAD! THIS IS THE WRONG ONE! OH, WELL. SHE WILL SOON BREAK ANOTHER COMMANDMENT WHEN I FEEL BETTER, AND I'LL GO INSIDE HER HEAD AND GET HER THEN!

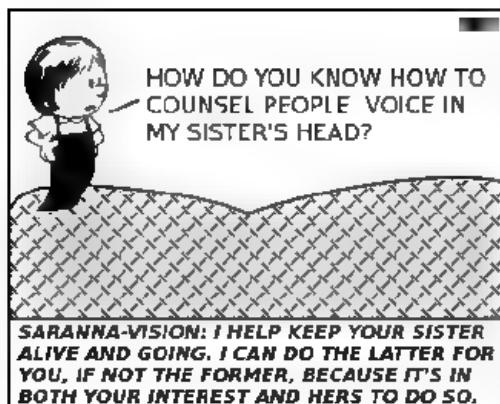


A FEW DAYS BEFORE I GOT ARJENFLORB SYNDROME, I DREAMED OF A WEIRD HATTED LUMBER-CHICKEN

SARANNA-VISION: ANALYZING... THAT WAS NOT A DREAM. THE CHICKEN GOD WAS ACTUALLY TALKING TO YOU, ALBEIT ERRONEOUSLY. THE INCUBATION PERIOD OF ARJENFLORB SYNDROME IS FROM SEVERAL DAYS TO A WEEK AT MOST, WHICH PUTS IT IN RANGE FOR HIM TO HAVE INFECTED YOU WITH IT AT THAT TIME WITH HIS DIVINE POWER. AND HIS WEIRD HAT WAS A HOT WATER BOTTLE, TO HELP WITH HIS HEADACHE AT THE TIME.

WAIT, THAT BLASPHEMY INDUCED MIGRAINE! AND IT WASN'T JUST A RUMOR THAT THE SYNDROME WAS A WAY FOR THE CHICKEN TO KILL HERETICS, AT LEAST SOME OF THE TIME. IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN HER, NOT ME

IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN NEITHER OF YOU. REGARDLESS OF ANYTHING ELSE, AN EVIL GOD'S SPITE, HOWEVER MISAIMED, IS NO ONE'S FAULT BUT THE GOD'S. WITHOUT THAT MIGRAINE, MAX'S RESCUE MISSION WOULD HAVE LIKELY FAILED, AND THE CHICKEN WOULD WIN LONG-TERM, DOOMING US ALL!

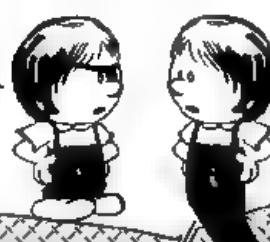


SARANNA-VISION: FOR THE SAME REASON, I HAVE LET YOU INTO HER HEAD INSTEAD OF FREEZING YOU OUT YOU ARE NOT HOSTILE TO HER; YOUR MEMORIES SHOW THAT MAX HAD SIMON MAGUSSAURUS LIBERATE YOU SOON AFTER YOU ARRIVED, SINCE HE HAD REASON TO BELIEVE THAT YOU WERE SARANNA'S REFLECTION, SO THE CHICKEN HAS NO MEANS TO GET HER MEMORIES FROM YOU; AND THE SNOW DEMONS WHO PUT ME HERE ARE PLEASED BY THAT.

AND THEY PUT YOU HERE BEFORE THE CHICKEN COULD GET IN HER HEAD TO INFECT HER! AND HER MEMORIES SAY THAT THE CHICKEN'S KEEPING HER ALIVE TO TRY TO GET ACCESS TO HER POWER!

YES, THEY WERE PLANNING ON DEALING WITH HER SOON, BUT THE INCIDENT WITH YOU CONVINCED THEM THAT RIGHT THEN WAS THE PERFECT TIME, BOTH TO DO WHAT THEY DO AND TO GET ONE OVER ON THE CHICKEN. YOU'LL UNDERSTAND MORE WHEN YOU PROCESS HER MEMORIES AS SHE HAS YOURS.

. SO I WAS THE CHICKEN'S REAL TARGET ALL ALONG . AT LEAST YOU GOT SOMETHING LIKE A NORMAL LIFE FOR YEARS BEFORE THAT, EVEN IF CALVIN WAS THE INCURABLE WEIRDNESS POSTER CHILD TO YOU! NOT THAT THE GOBLINS HAVEN'T BEEN GOOD TO ME!



HE SEEMS TO HAVE MELLOWED OUT IN THE YEARS SINCE I LEFT, YES AND I HAD NO IDEA THAT COUSIN YOLANDA HAD GOTTEN SO FANATICAL! IF YOU'D ESCAPED ARENFLORB SYNDROME AND DIDN'T HAVE THE SNOW DEMONS' PROTECTION, SHE'D HAVE HAD YOU THROWN IN THE DUNGEON AND KILLED FOR SOMETHING!

SARANNA VISION: SHAMAN GHEFZARAL HAS BEEN WATCHING ALL YOUR DEALINGS WITH THE GHOSTS TO DETERMINE WHETHER YOU ARE WORTHY OF FULFILLING THE PROPHECY.

AT LEAST WE CAN TALK AT THE SPEED OF THOUGHT IN HERE, SO MUCH TO LEARN!

SARANNA VISION: HE CANNOT SEE INSIDE HERE, BUT BOTH YOU AND CALVIN ARE ON THE VERGE OF PASSING THE TEST!

WE'VE BEEN WAITING HERE FOR A FEW MINUTES HOW MUCH LONGER WILL THEY TAKE?

THEY'RE WAKING UP! LOOK!

BACK OUTSIDE

BOTH OF THEM STARTED TALKING AT ONCE. I SOON LEARNED THE IMPORTANT BITS OF WHAT THEY KNEW AFTER PUTTING THEIR HEADS TOGETHER. SOME ARHENFLORB INFECTIONS WERE DELIBERATELY CAUSED BY THE CHICKEN, SO THAT WASN'T A RUMOR AND HE WAS EVEN MORE EVIL THAN WE THOUGHT. AND SARANNA'S EVIL COUSIN WAS NAMED YOLANDA. (WHAT WAS UP WITH CHICKEN'S FANATICS KEEPING THEIR REAL NAMES SECRET?)

ALSO, SARANNA WAS THE CHICKEN'S INTENDED TARGET, NOT SUSIE, AND THE SNOW DEMONS SAVED HER WITH THEIR DEAL LOOKING BACK, I DON'T KNOW HOW THEY HANDLED KNOWING THAT SO WELL.

WELL, MOST OF THE IMPORTANT BITS, HOW HAD MAX BEEN ABLE TO CONTACT SARANNA WHEN THE BARRIER BETWEEN REALMS WAS WEAK? HOW HAD BRIAN ARRIVED HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE? SUSIE AND SARANNA MIGHT KNOW THE ANSWERS, BUT I DIDN'T YET.

JUST SO WE'RE ALL ON THE SAME PAGE, I'LL FILL YOU IN ON WHAT ELSE DID AS A GHOST

THAT REMINDS ME: I NEED TO GET BACK IN TOUCH WITH "SEYMOUR," OR S MKDVSPHD2RTB-013804-2831025427049128090-3269983702310785328.

ANOTHER ROBOT? HOW MANY ARE YOU IN CONTACT WITH?

NO, SEYMOUR IS THE NAME HE WAS BORN WITH. HIS ROBOT NAME IS HONORARY.

YOU HAVE A LOT OF FRIENDS!

I SPENT THE FIRST YEARS OF MY GHOSTHOOD GETTING USED TO IT. THE ORIENTATION COULD ONLY SHOW ME SO MUCH, AND DISCOVERING THE LIBRARY OF BOOKS BURNED IN THE LIVING WORLD WAS A GOD-SEND OR AN ONSEND, SINCE MY CASEWORKER H.ROAKI TOLD ME ABOUT IT

I WAS STILL WORRIED ABOUT YOU AND SEEING WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO SUSIE, WHOM I BARELY KNEW AT THE TIME, AND HER TWIN WHOM I DON'T KNOW AT ALL AT THE TIME IT ONLY GOT WORSE

GIVEN ALL THE MASS MURDERS?

EXACTLY THERE WAS A REALM-WIDE PARTY FOR A WEEK AFTER THE BIG FOUR WERE TURNED INTO POOP GHOSTS BUT WHEN THE CHICKEN TOOK OVER THE JOBS AND KILLED MORE IN MONTHS THAN THEY HAD IN YEARS UNTIL HE GOT HIS BLOODTHIRST SLIGHTLY UNDER CONTROL

MAX I DECIDED TO TRY AND PULL CALVIN HERE TO FIND OUT HOW HE WAS DOING. IT DEFIED THE PROPHECY, SINCE SOME OTHER PARTS OF IT HADN'T YET COME TO PASS, BUT SHAMAN GHEFZARAL AGREED IT WAS AN EMERGENCY. SOME PROPHECIES COULD BE BENT TO A DEGREE WITHOUT BREAKING THEM ENTIRELY. UNFORTUNATELY WE FOUND OUT THAT THIS PROPHECY WOULDN'T BEND THAT WAY.

ROBOT CALVIN: BRIAN.

WOLF CALVIN: SEYMOUR.

IT TURNED OUT THAT, SINCE THE PROPHECY WOULDN'T BEND, SOMETHING ELSE HAD TO: THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN REALITIES. ZWAB THE GOBLIN TRIED STABILIZING THE PORTAL, BUT IT WAS BEYOND HIS SKILL TO DO SO, EVEN WITH GHEFZARAL'S ASSISTANCE

ZWAB WAS BEFORE MY TIME. I HOPE HE DIDN'T END UP INJURED!

NO, BUT WE PULLED BRIAN THE ROBOT HERE INSTEAD, AND PUT SEYMOUR THE WOLF WHERE BRIAN USED TO BE, AS YOU KNOW!

TIFFANY WAS FURIOUS, AND THE ON SPACE WARDENS WERE, TOO, UNTIL THEY TRIED PUTTING BRIAN AND SEYMOUR BACK, AND WERE UNABLE TO TRYING TO BREAK THIS PROPHECY. IT EVEN STRONGER. LUCKY FOR US, YOU'VE NEVER SEEN TIFFANY REALLY ANGRY

BRIAN AND SEYMOUR WERE PUT IN A MULTIVERSAL HOLDING ROOM DURING THE MONTH LONG ATTEMPT TO PUT THEM BOTH BACK, AND THEY BONDED ENOUGH THAT THEY'RE STILL IN TOUCH, SINCE THEY'RE BOTH ALTERNATE VERSIONS OF CALVIN. I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT PART SEYMOUR HAS IN THE PROPHECY, IF ANY.

I SUSPECT THAT HE HAS A PART TO PLAY IN A DIFFERENT PROPHECY, GIVEN OUR LAST CORRESPONDENCE. HE IS GOING UP AGAINST ANOTHER DEMIURGE, THE LATHEEKEEP, AND TURNING THAT DEMIURGE'S FOLLOWERS INTO MUTTON.



BUT DUE TO HIS NOT BEING FEY, AND NOT HAVING VISION LIKE MINE, HE CAN HAVE TROUBLE TELLING THEM APART AT ALL, MUCH LESS DETERMINING THEIR GENDER. IRONIC, GIVEN HIS FIXATION ON GENDER.



BRIAN MY INITIAL ARRIVAL IN THIS REALITY WAS CONFUSING, BUT AS WITH THE DESTRUCTION OF MY NATIVE REALITY I ADAPTED QUICKLY

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BRIAN AND I TOOK A CLASS ON THE MULTIVERSE AND COSMOLOGY DURING THE YEARS WE WERE WAITING FOR YOU, AND WE LEARNED THAT WE'RE MORE FORTUNATE THAN MANY OTHER REALITIES, BELIEVE IT OR NOT!



AND AS YOU TOLD SUSIE, SOME OF THE ON ARE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO HOLD THE GODS LEASHES IF MULTIPLE ONES GET CORRUPTED AT ONCE I RIGHT YOU SEEM TO BE TAKING YOUR NEW MEMORIES WELL.



HAVE ANOTHER QUESTION ABOUT THE DUNGEON GOBLINS ALL THE ONES EVERYONE TALKS ABOUT GET CALLED "HE" ARE THEY ALL GUYS?



OKAY, BUT IF HIS POWERS DON'T WORK ON FEY, HOW DID HE SUBVERT THEIR MAGIC TO ENSLAVE THEM IN THE FIRST PLACE?



I WAS AS GOOD AT TRANSLATING THEM AS I AM NOW, ALTHOUGH I GAVE THE SHORT VERSION OF WHAT I SAID AT THE TIME

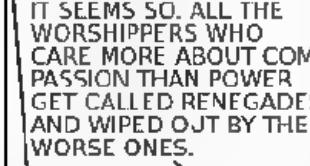
UH... I FEEL AS THOUGH I WAS RUN OVER BY A TRUCK!



A TORTURING, MASS-MURDERING, EUGENICIST, AXE WIELDING CHICKEN GOD WITH AN ARMY OF TRANSFORMED TELEKINETIC BUTT PEOPLE, BRAINWASHED ORDINARY PEOPLE, ENSLAVED DUNGEON GOBLINS, WILLING GUN GNOMES, AND GODS KNOW WHAT ELSE COULD BE WORSE?



SO ALL MONOTHEISMS END UP CORRUPTED EVENTUALLY?



IT SEEMS SO. ALL THE WORSHIPPERS WHO CARE MORE ABOUT COMPASSION THAN POWER GET CALLED RENEGADES AND WIPE OUT BY THE WORSE ONES.



SARANNA, YOU'D KNOW THIS BETTER THAN I

MOST PRETEND TO BE, DUE TO THE CHICKEN'S GENDER BIASES, BUT THEY ACTUALLY ONLY TAKE ON A GENDER ONCE A MONTH, DURING MATING SEASON

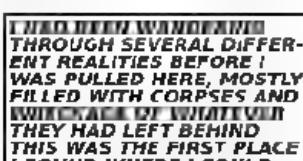


BUT WHEN THE CHICKEN SUBVERTED THEIR FEY MAGIC TO MAKE THE MAGICAL TETHER USED TO ENSLAVE THEM, HE TETHERED THE R MATING, TOO. HE ONLY ALLOWS IT WHEN HE NEEDS THEM TO PRODUCE MORE SLAVES

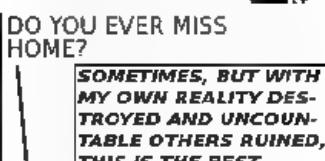


GHEFZARA, SAID HIS PREDECCESSOR WAS CORRUPT AND LET THE CHICKEN IN

THE INFAMOUS EX SHAMAN GHIMZUROS!



THE GOBLINS WERE ABLE TO FIX THE MAJOR WEAKNESS IN THEIR MAGIC THAT THE CHICKEN EXPLOITED WITH GHIMZUROS' HELP, THOUGH THEY DON'T TALK ABOUT WHAT IT WAS. THE ONLY WAY TO BREAK THE TETHER IS TO TAKE THE CHICKEN DOWN, AND TO ENSURE THERE AREN'T ANY MORE "ZURLINGS," OR TRAITOROUS COLLABORATORS!



DO YOU EVER MISS HOME?

SOMETIMES, BUT WITH MY OWN REALITY DESTROYED AND UNCONTROLLABLE OTHERS RUINED, THIS IS THE BEST PLACE TO BE, ALL

I WONDER WHY THIS PLACE ISN'T RUINED!



THE REASON THE PLEROMA COUNCIL WORKS SO WELL IS BECAUSE THE MONOTHEISTIC GODS WHO COULD NOT PLAY WELL WITH OTHERS ARE DEAD. IN REALITIES WHERE THEY ARE NOT, THEY FIGHT SO HARD TO CLAIM ULTIMATE LEADERSHIP THAT THEY LAY THE LOCAL UNIVERSE TO WASTE MORE OFTEN THAN NOT. THE CHICKEN'S TURNING THE MOST AUTHORITARIAN GODS, HIS DIRECT COMPETITION, INTO POOP ENSURED THIS REALITY'S LONG-TERM SURVIVAL.



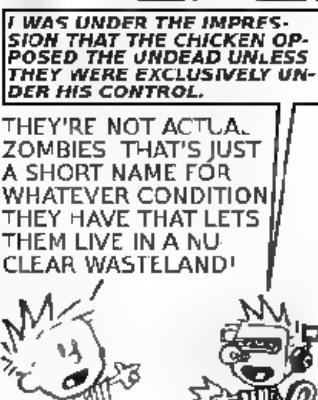
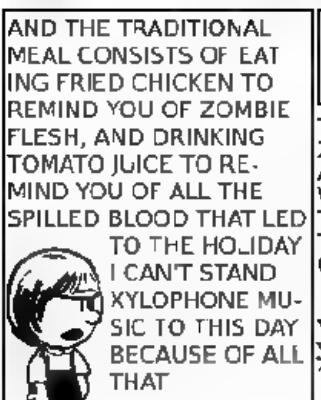
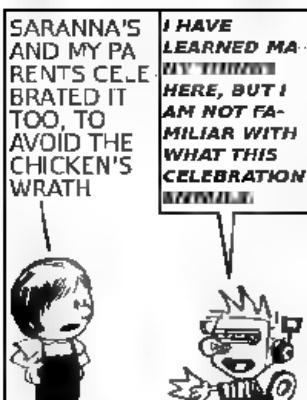
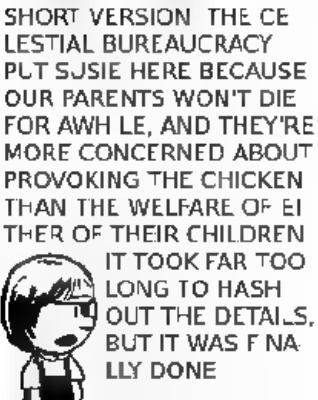
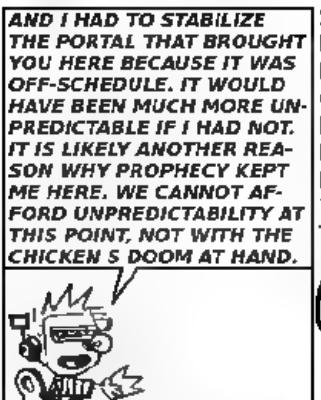
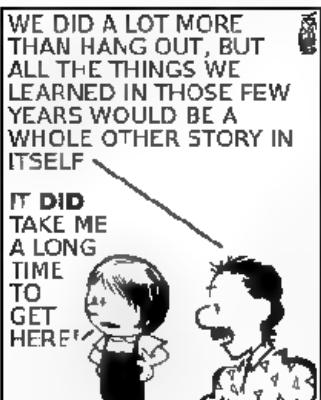
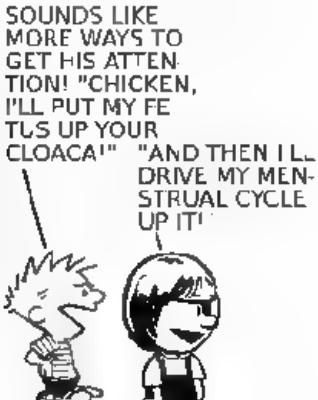
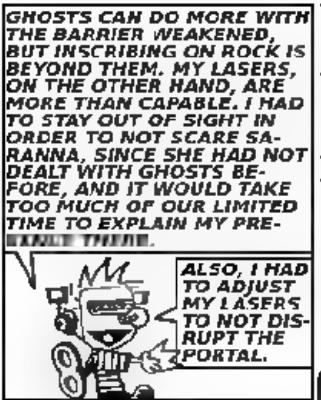
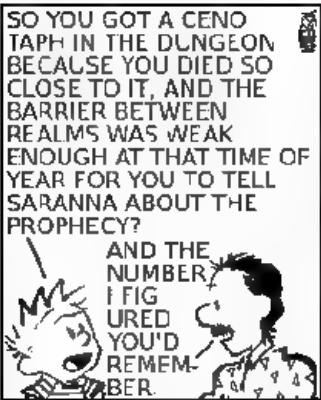
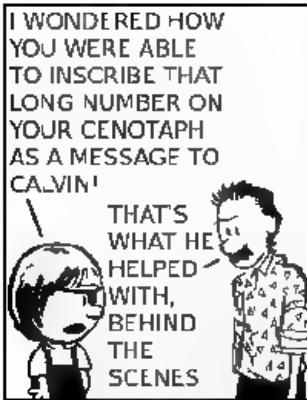
WHAT IF A GOD IN THE COUNCIL GETS CORRUPTED AND TRIES TO CLAIM THEY'RE THE ONLY TRUE GOD WHO GETS TO RUN THINGS?

THE OTHER GODS HAVE A PACT TO BAND TOGETHER AND DESTROY THEM AS SOON AS THAT HAPPENS



BUT LET ME GET BACK TO MY GHOSTLY EXPLOITS. BRIAN HAD ADAPTED TO MY LANGUAGE, AS WELL AS TO FEEDING ON ECTOPLASM TO NOT STARVE. AFTER THE FAILED ATTEMPT TO PUT HIM BACK, HE STARTED STUDYING HOW THIS GHOST REALM WORKED, JUST IN CASE IT CAME IN HANDY. AFTER SARANNA ARRIVED IN THE DUNGEON.





I LOOKED UP THE DETAILS OF IT AFTER I ARRIVED AND WENT THROUGH OR ENTATION ALL THE GHOSTS OF PEOPLE BEING MASS MURDERED BY THE BIG FOUR AND THEN THE CHICKEN REM NDED ME OF IT. IT WAS SHEER MORBID CURIOSITY ON MY PART

AND THEN THE PROPHECY GOT BROKEN WHEN THE LUMBERCHICKEN CAME AND TURNED THE OLD TRINITY INTO THE BUTT VICEROY, OR SO WE THOUGHT UNTIL HE MADE THAT DEAL WITH THE EXILES ON THE BUTT VICE. ROY'S BEHALF, R GHT? OR AM I MISSING SOMETHING HERE?

AS WELL AS THE ACTUAL COMBATANTS WHOSE ATROCITIES GOT WORSE AND WORSE THE END CAME WHEN THE CHICKEN OFFERED THE EXILES A DEAL. THEY COULD WORSHIP HIM OR NOT, BUT EITHER WAY HE WOULD ENSURE THEIR LASTING VICTORY. THEY WERE CLOSE TO WINNING, BUT THAT WORD CONVINCED THEM

EVERYTHING LIVING IN THAT LAND DIED IN THE SERIES OF EXPLOSIONS, EXCEPT FOR THE PEOPLE WHOSE LAND IT NOW OFFICIALLY WAS BY THE CHICKEN'S DECREE AND THEY FOUND THAT THEY WERE MIGRATED TO THE POINT WHERE THEY COULD SUSTAIN THEMSELVES BY FEEDING ON THE RADIATION ITSELF

SO, BRIAN, THAT'S WHY YOU HADN'T HEARD OF THAT HOL DAY. ALL THE RESEARCH I DID ON IT WAS BEFORE YOU GOT HERE, AND NO ONE ACKNOWLEDGES IT UNLESS IT COMES UP, MUCH LESS CELEBRATES IT, UNLESS THEY'RE IN THE LUMBERCHICKEN'S CROSSHAIRS AND FORCED TO DO IT!

IT WAS SOMETHING THE OLD TRINITY STARTED ONE GROUP OF PEOPLE GOT EXILED FROM THE HOMELAND AND WERE OPPRESSED FOR AGES, AND THERE WAS A PROPHECY THAT THEY'D GET IT BACK, AND THEN THEY'D ALL DIE EXCEPT FOR A CHUNK OF THEM WHO WOULD CONVERT TO THE OLD TRINITY

THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT TOO, BUT ANY PROPHECY THAT GETS BENT OR BROKEN IS SUPPOSED TO BACKLASH IN SOME WAY I DOUBLE CHECKED THE PROPHECY RECORDS HERE. IT WAS NEVER A REAL PROPHECY. THE BACKLASH FROM IT WASN'T SUBTLE, IT WAS NONEXISTENT.

WELL, THAT AND A DEMONSTRATION OF WHAT HE COULD DO. HE SAID THEY ALL WOULD HAVE THE LAND TO THEMSELVES AS LONG AS THEY LIVED, THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO SUCCESSFULLY ADAPT TO ANY ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS IN IT, AND HE WOULD SET UP A SHIELD TO PROTECT THEM FROM ALL OUTSIDE HOSTILE FORCES.

OUTSIDE THE LAND, THE RADIATION LEVELS WERE LOW ENOUGH BY COMPARISON THAT THEIR NEW FORMS STARVED, SO THEY WERE STUCK BEHIND THEIR SHIELD. THEY ALSO FOUND THAT THEY WERE STERILE FROM THE RADIATION AND WOULD HAVE NO DESCENDANTS. THEY COMPLAINED TO THE CHICKEN, AND HE SAID:

AND THE DEAD WHO DO ARE THE ONES IN THE LUMBERCHICKEN'S BOSOM AND FAR, FAR AWAY FROM THIS PLACE!

THAT MAKES SENSE. MY PEOPLE HAVE A RARELY-MENTIONED GOD OF RUIN WHO ACTED SIMILARLY.

BUT SURELY OTHER PEOPLE HAD MOVED INTO THEIR OLD HOMELAND IN THE MEANTIME?

EXACTLY. YET ANOTHER FIGHT OVER WHO GETS TO RIGHTFULLY LIVE ON WHICH LAND

WHAT MADE THIS FIGHT MORE SPECIAL THAN OTHERS?

THE SUPPOSED PROPHECY ABOUT IT

IT STATED THAT THE OLD TRINITY WOULD TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN AFFAIRS AND BECOME THE OFFICIAL RULER OF EARTH INSTEAD OF WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES HALF THE TIME. SOME OF THE EXILES DIDN'T BELIEVE THE DEATH AND CONVERS ON PART OF THE PROPHECY, AND THEY BEFRIENDED RICH AND POWERFUL OLD TRINITY WORSHIPPERS IN ORDER TO GET THEIR HELP GOING TO WAR.

AND WHILE THE OLD TRINITY LOVED BLOODY BATTLE, IT ESPECIALLY LOVED BLOODY BATTLE TILTED GREATLY IN FAVOR OF ITS CHOSEN SIDE.

YES. THE EXILES, WITH THE SUPPORT OF THEIR FRIENDS, HAD A GREAT ADVANTAGE. BUT, ON BOTH SIDES, IT WAS MOSTLY THE LEADERS PUSHING TO KEEP THE WAR GOING WHILE ORDINARY CIVILIANS AND CHILDREN DIED FOR THEM.

MAX THEIR LEADERS AGREED TO THE TERMS AND WIPE OUT THEIR ENEMIES ENTIRELY, AND THAT LED TO THE CHICKEN'S MASTER STROKE. THEY HAD A STOCKPILE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS, AND HE DELIBERATELY SET THEM ALL OFF AT ONCE INSIDE THEIR SHIELD.



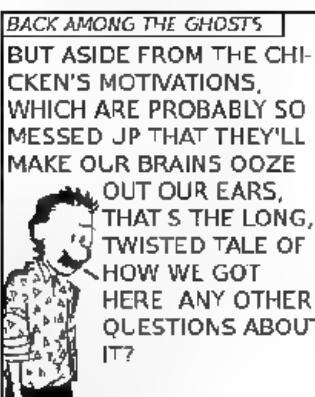
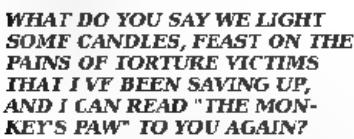
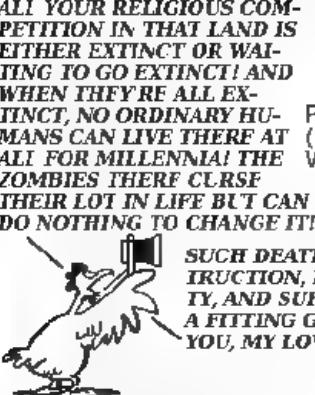
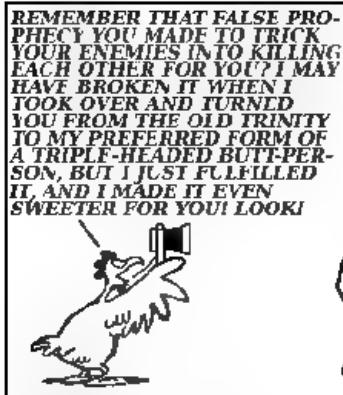
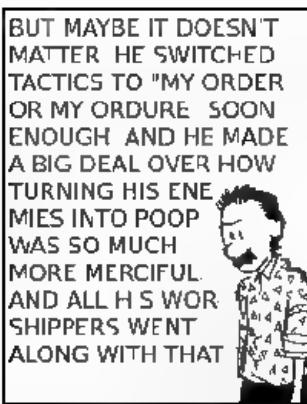
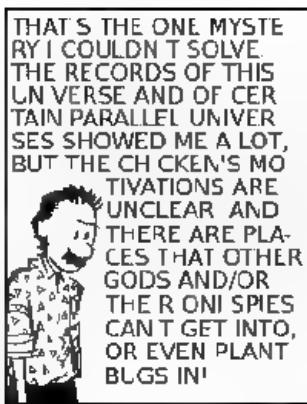
YES, THEY'RE LEFT TO DIE OF OLD AGE OR COMMIT SUICIDE, AND THE SHIELD KEEPS ALL OF THE RADIATION INSIDE. THE WORST THING IS, THE OLD TRINITY PICKED SIDES FOR THEIR "PROPHECY" BY FLIPPING A COIN, AND THE OTHER SIDE ACTS THE SAME WAY IN REAL TIES WHERE IT GETS THE POWER, THE LAND, AND THE CHICKEN'S INTERVENTION. NUCLEAR DEATH FOR BOTH SIDES

ONE OF THESE YEARS, I'LL HAVE TO LEARN ROBOT SPEAK SO I CAN FULLY UNDERSTAND BRIAN!

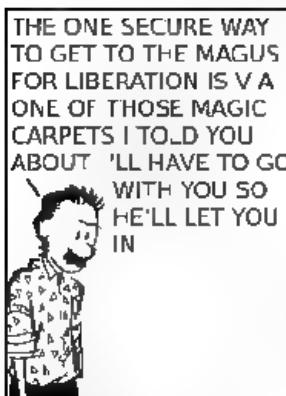
WHEN YOU'RE OLDER, BOTH ROBOTS AND HUMANS CAN BE DEPRAVED

AS THE SAYING GOES:
324524222823251141-
2416272985472731410-
388524061727117322-
3259130688125823543-
3259108102088807536-
1443829435325344631-

YES, THAT FITS!



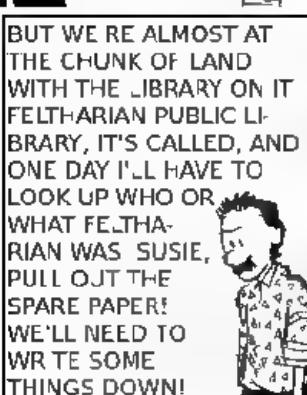
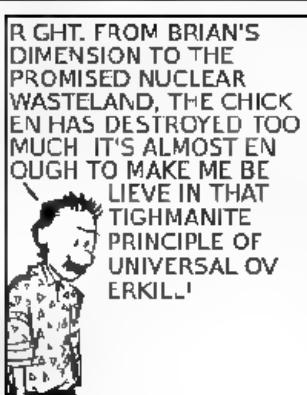
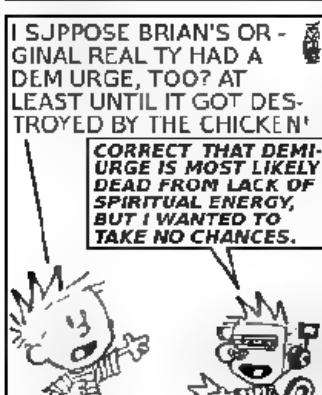
IF SARANNA AND I NEED TO BE LIBERATED, HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET TO THE MAGUS TO GET IT DONE, SINCE WE'RE HEADING TO THE LIBRARY FIRST?



THERE'S A MAGIC CARPET ROOM INSIDE THE LIBRARY, CONVENIENTLY

DID BRIAN GET LIBERATED, TOO?

YES, AS A PRE-CAUTION DUE TO MY INVOLVEMENT WITH THE PROPHECY, HOWEVER ACCIDENTAL IT WAS.



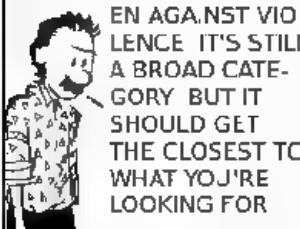
THE LIBRARY WAS SO BIG THAT IT WAS DIVIDED INTO SEVERAL SUB-LIBRARIES, AND SOME PEOPLE EVEN HELD CLASSES THERE TO CALL IT DAUNTING WOULD BE AN UNDERSTATEMENT.



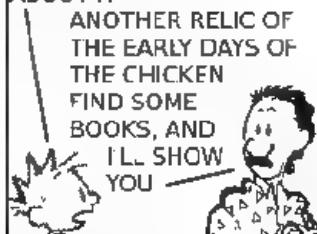
THERE'S SO MUCH HERE! THE HARD PART IS GOING TO BE FIGURING OUT WHICH BOOKS HAVE THE INFORMATION WE NEED! IF IT WERE EASY, THE LUMBERCHICKEN WOULD BE LONG GONE BY NOW!



THERE'S A WAY TO NARROW IT DOWN SEARCH FOR ANYTHING FLAGGED AS CENSORED BY THE H.C.A.V. THE HERO-PHANTS FOR THE CHICKEN AGAINST VIOLENCE IT'S STILL A BROAD CATEGORY BUT IT SHOULD GET THE CLOSEST TO WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR



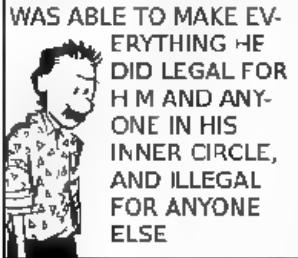
THE H.C.A.V. SOUNDS FAMILIAR, BUT I DON'T KNOW THAT MUCH ABOUT IT



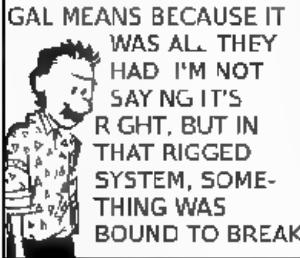
HERE ARE A FEW A BOOK OF BABY NAMES AND A BOOK OF MOVIE QUOTES! BUT WHY ARE THOSE CONSIDERED VIOLENT?



THE CHICKEN WAS PARANOID ABOUT IT IN THE BEGINNING HE FOUND ENOUGH SUPPORTERS IN HIGH PLACES THAT HE WAS ABLE TO MAKE EVERYTHING HE DID LEGAL FOR HIM AND ANYONE IN HIS INNER CIRCLE, AND ILLEGAL FOR ANYONE ELSE



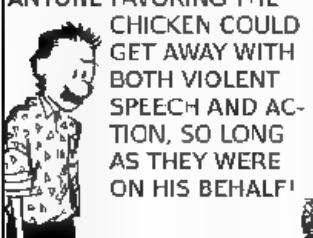
WHEN THERE WERE NO LEGAL MEANS FOR SOME PEOPLE TO GET WHAT THEY NEEDED, SOME OF THEM TURNED TO ILLEGAL MEANS BECAUSE IT WAS ALL THEY HAD. I'M NOT SAYING IT'S RIGHT, BUT IN THAT RIGGED SYSTEM, SOMETHING WAS BOUND TO BREAK.



SO HE WAS STILL DOING THE "SOME FAVORED AND LOTS OF DISFAVORED" THING YOU TALKED ABOUT, EVEN THEN?



ANYONE OPPPOSING THE CHICKEN GOT CENSORED FOR ANY SPEECH THAT MIGHT REMOTELY BE CONSIDERED VIOLENT, WHILE ANYONE FAVORING THE CHICKEN COULD GET AWAY WITH BOTH VIOLENT SPEECH AND ACTION, SO LONG AS THEY WERE ON HIS BEHALF!



WHICH IS WHY HIS ORDER OF RELIGIOUS CENSORS, THE H.C.A.V., WAS USUALLY UNABBREVIATED AS "HYPOCRITES, ADVANCED BY THOSE IN THE OUT-GROUP SERIOUSLY, YOU DON'T KNOW HOW DEEP THEIR CENSORSHIP WENT!"



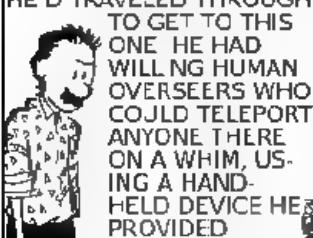
OR MAYBE YOU DO DID ANYONE IN YOUR SCHOOL SUDDENLY HAVE TO CHANGE NAMES?



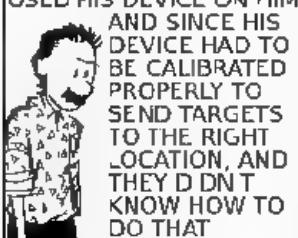
RIGHT, THE EXTRADIMENSIONAL MINE TELEPORTATION INCIDENT WITH THE TWINS



WHILE THE CHICKEN CONSOLIDATED HIS POWER, HE GOT RID OF MOST OF HIS OPPONENTS BY DEPORTING THEM TO MINES IN ONE OF THE DIMENSIONS HE'D TRAVELED THROUGH TO GET TO THIS ONE. HE HAD WILLING HUMAN OVERSEERS WHO COULD TELEPORT ANYONE THERE ON A WHIM, USING A HANDHELD DEVICE HE PROVIDED



LUNA AND SELENE WERE A SET OF TWINS WHO SURPRISED AN OVERSEER WHO'D SENT THEIR FRIENDS TO THE MINES, OVERPOWERED HIM, AND USED HIS DEVICE ON HIM. AND SINCE HIS DEVICE HAD TO BE CALIBRATED PROPERLY TO SEND TARGETS TO THE RIGHT LOCATION, AND THEY DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO DO THAT



HE MATERIALIZED IN SOLID ROCK, DIED INSTANTLY, AND THE TWINS' NAMES WERE ADDED TO THE "POTENTIAL VIOLENCE" LIST, JUST BEFORE THEY WERE EXECUTED. SO MUCH HYPE ABOUT HOW THE OVERSEER HAD A FAMILY, BUT NOTHING ABOUT ALL THE FAMILIES HE'D DESTROYED



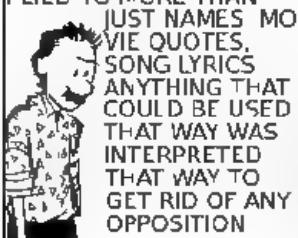
IT'S ONLY BECAUSE HE HAD THE RIGHT FRIENDS!



AND ALL THIS TIME I THOUGHT IT WAS BECAUSE "MOON MOON" HAD SUNG THAT SONG "THE HANDS ON THE PHALLUS GO UP AND DOWN" EARLIER THAT DAY! A PHALLUS IS A TYPE OF GUN, RIGHT? UH, NO. BUT IT'S STILL INAPPROPRIATE



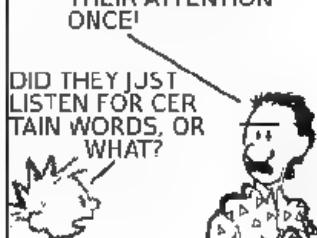
LEAVING ASIDE WHAT SOME PEOPLE CAN DO TO THE WHEELS ON THE BJS GO ROUND AND ROUND," THE ANTI VIOLENCE CENSORSHIP APPLIED TO MORE THAN JUST NAMES, MOVIE QUOTES, SONG LYRICS ANYTHING THAT COULD BE USED THAT WAY WAS INTERPRETED THAT WAY TO GET RID OF ANY OPPOSITION



WAS WARNED ONCE. IT WAS IN COLLEGE AFTER THE BAND INCIDENT IN ONE CLASS, IF YOU WERE LATE, YOU HAD TO SING IT WAS IN THE SYLLABUS, AND I WAS LATE



"KUNG FU FIGHTING" WASN'T GOING TO ACTUALLY FIGHT ANYONE, BUT THE H.C.A.V. DIDN'T CARE. I'M LUCKY I ONLY DREW THEIR ATTENTION ONCE!

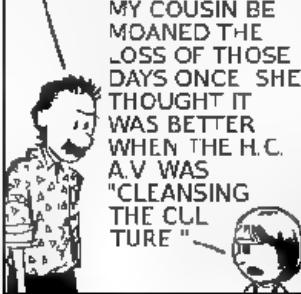


DID THEY JUST LISTEN FOR CERTAIN WORDS, OR WHAT?

APPARENTLY, BUT THEIR WORD WAS LAW, SO IT DIDN'T MATTER HOW MANY FALSE POSITIVES THEY GOT IT WAS ABOUT CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE OF FEAR OF THE CHICKEN



IT WAS THE REALLY EARLY DAYS OF THE CHICKEN'S REIGN HE HADN'T MADE THEM YET

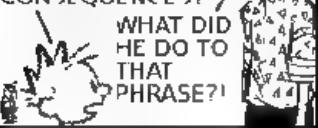


EVEN WHEN THE CHICKEN EMPOWERED THEM BY TURNING THEM INTO HIPPO CHICKEN HYBRIDS THAT WERE SUPER STRONG AND IMMUNE TO DAMAGE AS LONG AS THEY EXCLUSIVELY ATE DIVINE CHICKEN POOP? AS A REWARD FOR ALL THE CHICKEN POOP THAT THEY'D SHOVED FOR HIM AS HUMANS? YIKES!

SARANNA. YES. I NEVER UNDERSTOOD MY COUSIN AND YUK! MAX AT LEAST THEY DIDN'T LAST LONG, SINCE IN SOME WAYS THEY WERE STRONGER THAN THE BUTT ARMY



SO IT'S LIKE DAD'S FREEDOM OF SPEECH, WHERE "FREEDOM OF SPEECH DOESN'T MEAN FREEDOM FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF THAT SPEECH" AND HE EXCLUSIVELY DEALS OUT THE CONSEQUENCES?



AS LONG AS I NEVER SAY ANYTHING HE DOESN'T LIKE, HE WON'T PUNISH ME, AND IF I'M NOT AROUND HIM IN ORDER TO AVOID PUNISHMENT, I'M ANTI SOCIAL AND A COWARD, SO I'M BAD



CALVIN. HE WAS A LOT EASIER ON HER, AT LEAST BEFORE HE HAD HER TURNED INTO A BUTT PERSON. ALTHOUGH WHEN HE D SAY THAT "SOCIETY STAR TED GOING DOWNHILL WHEN WE STARTED LETTING WOMEN VOTE," SHE D AGREE WITH HIM TO HIS FACE AND DISAGREE WITH HIM BEHIND HIS BACK, SO I GUESS HE BROKE HER MAX. FREEDOM OF SPEECH MEANS THE GOVERNMENT CAN T PUNISH YOU FOR SAYING THE WRONG THINGS. CALVIN DAD SAYS THAT TOO. BUT HE WANTS TO BE THE GOVERNMENT WHEN IT SUITS HIM AND NOT WHEN IT DOESN'T AND HE SWEARS THE CHICKEN ALWAYS AGREES WITH HIM. BUT HE SAID THAT ABOUT THE OLD TRINITY BEFORE, TOO.

BUT TO REALLY ANSWER YOUR QUEST ON, MOM WOULD OPPOSE DAD SOMETIMES, BUT NOT OFTEN, AND NOT ENOUGH TO ACTUALLY MATTER MUCH



YOU COULD SAY THE SAME ABOUT ME! AT LEAST I WASN'T THE ONLY HUMAN THE GOBLINS TOOK IN, SO THEY HAD SOME IDEA OF HOW TO HELP ME!



SO BEFORE WE KNUCKLE DOWN AND DO SOME RESEARCH, WHAT HAPPENED TO THE H.C.A.V. HIPPO CHICKENS?



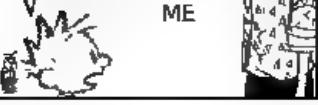
MAX. HE FINALLY SWAPPED IT FOR ORDINARY CHICKEN POOP THAT HE POISONED. THEY COULDN'T TELL THE DIFFERENCE, ATE IT, AND DIED

CENSORSHIP IS LIFE!



AFTER THAT, HE STARTED TURNING PEOPLE INTO BJTT PEOPLE TO SERVE HIM, AND TURNING GODS INTO POOP, AND MAKING HIS BIZARRE COMMANDMENTS ALL THE FAMILIAR STUFF AND MAKING THE OLD TRINITY A TERRIBLE BUTT PERSON?

RIGHT. HE DID THAT LAST AND IF YOU'RE WONDERING WHICH ONE OF THE THREE HEADS HE USES FOR BRAINWASHING, IT'S THE HOLY FART SPIRITS, IN THE MIDDLE. AN INNOCENT (AND DEAD) WITNESS TOLD ME



THE CHICKEN'S CENSORSHIP GOES ON TODAY, BUT HE DOES IT PERSONALLY, WITHOUT ANYONE ELSE IN THE WAY. THE ONLY TRACE OF HOW HE DID THINGS IN THE EARLY DAYS IS ORDERING HIS ARMY TO KILL BY TELLING THEM TO "MOON MOON" A TARGET WHICH IS WHY SHE GOT HER NAME BACK!

YES TELLING THE BUTT ARMY TO "MOON" A TARGET WOULD BE JUST TOO JUVENILE, BUT SAYING IT TWICE MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE IN THE CHICKEN'S MIND!

THAT IS RIDICULOUS!

WHAT A MIND!

IT'S ALSO WHY HE MADE THOSE FOUR DOCTORS DEMIGODS AND GAVE THEM NEW NAMES, TO MAKE IT HARDER FOR ANYONE ASSOCIATED WITH THEIR MANY, MANY VICTIMS TO STOP THEM, SINCE EVERYTHING THE BIG FOJR DID WAS LEGAL, TOO UNTIL HE TURNED ON THEM HIMSELF!

ONE LAST THING, REGARDING NUCLEAR FRIED CHICKEN DAY IS THE SHIELD GOING TO FALL WHEN THE CHICKEN GOES DOWN?



AND WITH THAT WE STARTED DIGGING FOR INFORMATION. ONE OF THE BOOKS IN THE DUNGEON LIBRARY WAS HALF BURNED, WIZARD STARDUST'S WAYS TO DISPOSE OF ENEMIES. IT'S COMPLETE HERE.



OKAY. TURN THE ENEMY INTO A GIANT VERSION OF THEIR OWN HEAD, FLY THE HEAD TO THE SPACE POCKET OF LIVING DEATH INHABITED BY THE HEADLESS GIANT KNOWN AS THE HEADLESS HEAD HUNTER. IS THERE A MAP OF SPACE HERE?



THERE'S A POSTER COVERING MOST OF THE OTHER ROOM. THE SPACE POCKET OF LIVING DEATH IS NEAR THE PLANET OF CONVENIENT MANAGEABLE DOOM, FORMERLY THE PLANET OF UNMANAGEABLE DOOM.



YOU'RE NOT FAZED BY HAVING TO TURN SOMEONE INTO A GIANT HEAD?

THE RIGHT KIND OF MAGIC CAN DO A LOT THE SPACE TRAVEL PART IS THE HARD BIT.

IF PEOPLE CAN BE TURNED INTO LIVING BUTTS, I GUESS

SO!

THEN THROW THE HEAD AT WHERE THE GIANT'S HEAD SHOULD BE, AND HE'LL ABSORB AND KILL IT. THEN FUSE ALL THE ENEMY'S FOLLOWERS INTO ONE PERSON AND DESTROY GRAVITY FOR THEM SO THEY FLY INTO SPACE AND DIE, TOO.



YOUR SARANNA *FLETCHER FRANKS* VISION D SAY YOU HAD TO GO INTO SPACE, BUT THAT SEEMS LIKE A LOT TO DO. AND WHAT'S UP WITH HE'S THE WIZARD'S LIKELY HAVING SUCH A NOT BULKED-UP BODY AC AND SUCH A TINY TULLY HEAD IN THE AUTHOR PICTURE?



BJT HE DISGUISES HIMSELF AS ONE TO NOT SCARE PEOPLE, LIKE THE CEL DINOS USED TO?

RIGHT. STRIKING FEAR INTO EVIL DOERS IS HIS THING WHEN HE DECIDES TO INTERVENE, BJT I DON'T KNOW IF HE'S STILL ALIVE



BUT THE PROPHCY ISN'T ABOUT HIM, EVEN IF WE USE ONE OF HIS METHODS.

RIGHT. AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT REALITY HE'S FROM, CONSIDERING THAT MARS GETS SET ON FIRE, HURLED AT EARTH, AND THEN PUT BACK IN ANOTHER OF HIS ACCOUNTS

I LOOKED MORE INTO THE EXTRADIMENSIONAL MINES THAT MAX MENTIONED, SINCE THE HAND HELD TELEPORTERS THAT TOOK PEOPLE THERE MIGHT BE USEFUL TO TAKE US OTHER PLACES. THE CHICKEN MAY HAVE ABANDONED THEM, BUT SOME PEOPLE STILL LIVE THERE AND MAKE HOMES THERE!

I TRACKED DOWN UNCLE MAX AND TOLD HIM ABOUT ALL OF THE BOOKS WE'D LOOKED INTO. SARANNA HAD GONE THROUGH SEVERAL GRIMOIRES BEFORE WIZARD STARDUST'S, AND I'D GONE THROUGH SEVERAL BOOKS ON HISTORY BEFORE THE NIRIMARIANS. WE NEEDED A DIFFERENT APPROACH.

THIS IS SUCH A FRUSTRATING SEARCH! TELL ME ABOUT THE GODS YOU'VE WORKED WITH. MAYBE IT'LL GIVE ME SOME NEW IDEAS!

SHE TRIED TO STOMP IMAGINATION OUT OF A KID? SAINT URFLENZAK'S WHEELS! WHY WOULD SHE DO THAT?

I SOON LEARNED URFLENZAK WAS A SAINT OF THE UNJUSTLY DISABLED, WHO ORIGINATED IN ANOTHER REALITY. SHE WAS VENERATED A LOT AFTER THE CHICKEN'S DEFEAT.

YES, AN ENTIRE PLANET SET ON FIRE AND THROWN AROUND WOULD HAVE GOTTEN ON THE NEWS! AND IF IT HAPPENED HERE, MAYBE IT COULD HAVE TAKEN OUT THE ARCHON OF MARS IF THE FIRE WAS STRONG ENOUGH! BUT

THAT'S NOT THIS REALITY. WHAT DOES YOUR VISION SAY ABOUT THE PLAN?

SOME OF THE GHOSTS FROM THERE FOUND THEIR WAY BACK TO THIS REALITY, AND ONE WROTE A BOOK ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES! IT'S COOL THAT THEY FOUND A WAY TO THRIVE ON WHAT DID THEY CALL IT.. NIRIMAR. BUT THERE'S NOTHING IN THERE ABOUT TELEPORTERS AS DE FROM THEIR USE IN ABDUCTION, SO IT'S A BUST TOO!

I DID AND HE GOT THE OTHERS AND CONSULTED WITH THEM.

DOES ANYONE KNOW WHAT TO DO HERE?

THE PROPHECY SPEAKS OF A GUIDE AND AN ANIMUS, WHOM WE HAVE YET TO DISCOVER. AND ARE NOT OBVIOUS TO ME, GODS NOTWITHSTANDING.

LET'S SEE THERE IS A HEADLESS HEADHUNTER IN THIS REALITY BUT HIS POWERS WORK AS DESCRIBED ONLY ON MORTALS. THE CHICKEN GOD'S HEAD WOULD MELD WITH HIS BODY AND TAKE IT OVER INSTEAD OF BEING ABSORBED. THE BUTT ARMY WOULD NOT BE STOPPED BY BEING FUSED AND LOSING GRAVITY, SINCE THEY COULD USE TELEKINESIS TO COMPENSATE FOR THE LATTER. AND IF THE BUTT ARMY GOT TO THE GIANT, THEY DON'T HAVE HEADS FOR HIM TO ABSORB, AND THERE'S NO BUTTLESS BUTT.

HUNTER HERE WHO COULD ABSORB THEIR BUTTS, COLLECTIVE OR FUSED. SO THAT PLAN'S A BUST

AT LEAST WE KNOW NOW DID YOU FIND ANYTHING USEFUL?

I HOPE MAX, SUSIE, AND BRIAN HAVE HAD BETTER LUCK FINDING BOOKS WE CAN USE

I HOPE SO, TOO, BUT THE PROPHECY DIRECTLY APPLIES TO US, SO WE HAVE TO BE THE ONES TO FIND THE GOLD NUGGETS IN THE DIRT!

I HAVE AN IDEA! WITH THE WAY EVERYONE HAS TO BE LIBERATED TO PROPERLY FIGHT THE CHICKEN, WHAT IF THE ANIMUS IS SOMETHING THAT ISN'T LIVING IN THE USUAL SENSE? I JUST KEEP THINKING OF MY OLD STUFFED RABBIT MR. BUN, AND HOW HE HAD SO MANY ADVENTURES TOGETHER BEFORE I LOST HIM WHEN WE MOVED!

CALVIN YOU SOUND LIKE THAT BOOK OF BARDIC PROVERBS! FOUND!

SARANNA, WHAT WAS IN IT? CALVIN "THE STRONG GIVE UP AND MOVE ON, WHILE THE WEAK GIVE UP AND STAY" "IF YOU CHOOSE NOT TO DECIDE YOU STILL HAVE MADE A CHOICE" "NOTHING GIVES EASY, EASY GIVES NOTHING" STUFF LIKE THAT

SARANNA SOUNDS LIKE SONG LYRICS IN BOOK FORM! BUT OF COURSE THE CHICKEN WOULD CENSOR WISDOM LIKE THAT IF IT DIDN'T PRAISE HIM UNCONDITIONALLY!

IMAGINATION COUNTS AS ANOTHER FORM OF ANIMISM! SARANNA WOULDN'T THINK OF IT OFFHAND BECAUSE OUR COUSIN TRIED TO STOMP IMAGINATION OUT OF HER FOR YEARS! THE GOBLINS LET HER USE IT, BUT HER ATTITUDE FOR MAGIC IS HAMPERED BY THE TIME SHE SPENT SUPPRESSING IT! THE PROPHECY WON'T WAIT!

SHE FIGURED SARANNA'S ONLY REAL PURPOSE WAS TO MAKE YOLKS FOR THE CHICKEN, AND SHE WOULDN'T NEED IMAGINATION THEN.

YET ANOTHER REASON TO TAKE THE CHICKEN DOWN! CALVIN, DID MY BROTHER DO THAT TO YOU?

YOU MEAN AFTER YOUR LAST VISIT? NO. HE TOLERATES IT, BUT HE'S SAID THAT I'LL HAVE TO GIVE IT UP WHEN I'M OLDER, AS PART OF MY "PUTTING AWAY CHILDISH THINGS."

ONLY BECAUSE HE DOESN'T SEE YOU AS BREEDING STOCK!

BJT TO GET BACK TO THE ISSUE AT HAND, SJISIE DOES HAVE A GOOD POINT I SHOULD HAVE MENTIONED IT EARLIER, BJT I HAD SO MUCH TO TELL ALREADY!

IMAGINATION AND MAGIC COMBINED ARE THE KEY TO THE KIND OF ANIMISM THAT MAY WELL BE WHAT THE ANIMUS NEEDS.

I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU MEAN'
IMAGINATION ALONE ISN'T ENOUGH TO ANIMATE SOMETHING LONG TERM, OR WE'D ALL BE DOING IT BUT MAGIC, PROPERLY POWERED BY IMAGINATION, IS!

IT WAS IN PUBLIC? HOW DID YOU COME ACROSS IT?
IT WAS PART OF A COLLECTION THAT WAS ALL THE RAGE AT THE TIME I FIGURED ONE COULD BE THE BAND'S MASCOT WITH A FEW TWEAKS, BUT IT WAS GONE BEFORE I COULD GET IT

IF THEIR REMAINS HAVE GHOSTS, DOES THAT TECHNICALLY MAKE THEIR REMAINS GHOST ZOMBIES?
SUPPOSE SO. IT'S STILL A GOOD EXAMPLE OF HOW MAGIC AFFECTS SOME THINGS

DON'T WORRY, IT'S NOT LONG THE GHOST ZOMBIES RAN WILD FOR A LITTLE WHILE, AND THE CHICKEN IGNORED THEM UNTIL THEY STARTED INTERFERING WITH HIS PREFERRED SERVANTS AMONG THE DEAD, THEN HE PUT THEM TO WORK.
HOW DID HE DO THAT?

SO IF I CAN MAGICALLY INFUSE ANOTHER SPIRIT INTO SOMETHING THAT I CAN IMAGINE AS ALIVE, IT WILL BE ALIVE ENOUGH TO HELP US FIGHT THE CHICKEN?
IF I UNDERSTAND IT CORRECTLY, YES.

I'LL GO GET SARANNA! SHE NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT THIS!
SHE'S ALREADY BEEN LOOKING INTO MAGIC! OR DOES IT NEED TO BE THE RIGHT KIND OF MAGIC TO WORK?

BUT IF EVERYTHING IS ALIVE, HOW DOES MAGIC CHANGE THAT?
THERE ARE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF ALIVE. I ONLY HAVE A BASIC UNDERSTANDING, BUT...

THE MAGIC THAT MADE THE CENSORS HIPPO CHICKENS AND GAVE THEM A POOP ADDICTION PERSISTED AFTER THEY DIED. THE CRAVING WAS BONE DEEP, AS IN THE GHOSTS OF THEIR SKELETONS BEGAN TO ATTRACT THE GHOSTS OF ACTUAL POOP. NOT JUST CHICKEN POOP, ALL POOP EVENTUALLY, THE POOP FUSED TO THEM

HE TOOK SOME OF HIS MOST DEDICATED SERVANTS' GHOSTS AND INFUSED THEM INTO THE GHOST-ZOMBIE FORMS. THE LATTER WERE ALIVE BEFORE, BUT NOW THEY WERE MORE ALIVE AND MORE CONTROLLABLE. THEN HE MADE THEM ALL GUARD THE GATES OF HIS HELL

I THINK THE PERSONALITIES OF WHAT YOU IMAGINE AND OF THE ACTUAL SPIRIT SHOULD MIX AS LONG AS THE SPIRIT DOESN'T CRAVE DESTRUCTION ON THE WAY. THE CENSORS BONES WANTED TO CONSUME MASS QUANTITIES OF POOP, IT SHOULDN'T BE A PROBLEM

I THINK SO. SUSIE MENTIONED HER STUFFED ANIMAL. DO YOU HAVE ONE OF THOSE? YOUR AFFINITY FOR IT MAY BE HELPFUL!
I HAD HOBBS THE TIGER FOR A BIT, BUT DAD OBJECTED TO HIM SINCE TIGERS EAT CHICKENS!

WAIT! WHAT'S GOING ON, NOW?
WE'RE TRYING TO FIGURE OUT IF THE WAY I ANIMATED MR. BUN COULD BE USED TO GET ANOTHER ALIY AGAINST THE CHICKEN!
THAT DOES SOUND USEFUL!

SO THEY'RE NOW GHOSTS OF BONES WITH ALL THEIR FLESH AND MUSCLES AND EVERYTHING REPLACED WITH GHOSTS OF POOP?
AND THEY'RE ONE WITH THE GHOSTS OF POOP!
ECLECTIC POOP GHOST ZOMBIES!

ACCORDING TO THE COUNCIL'S VARIOUS SPIES, THEY'RE STILL THERE. AND APPARENTLY, THE GATE TO THE CHICKEN'S HELL HAS "HE GETS US" WRITTEN ON IT IN HUGE LETTERS
THAT CAN MEAN A FEW DIFFERENT THINGS!

I WISH SOMEONE IN OUR GROUP HAD MORE THAN A LAYPERSON'S UNDERSTANDING OF ANIMISM, THOUGH, JUST TO MAKE SURE
DID YOU FORGET I AM WATCHING? SHAMAN CHEF ZARAL! RIGHT!

RIGHT, THE STUFFED ANIMAL PANIC THERE WAS ONE UNDER THE OLD TRINITY, TOO. I REMEMBER SEEING 'BELPHY' IN A STORE ONCE BEFORE IT ALL STARTED UP.
"BELPHY?"
A CUTESY LOOKING STUFFED VERSION OF BELEPHGOR THE DEMON

THE BEST EXAMPLE I CAN THINK OF INVOLVES THE CHICKEN'S CENSORS. I'VE TOLD YOU ABOUT PEOPLE THAT GOT TURNED INTO POOP GHOSTS, BUT THERE ARE ALSO THE GHOSTS OF POOP ITSELF, AS WELL AS THE GHOSTS OF THE REMAINS OF THE DEAD. THE HIPPO CHICKENS' STORY DIDN'T END WHEN THEY DIED, AT LEAST NOT FOR ALL OF THEM!

HOW OBSESSED IS THIS GOD WITH POOP?
PLEASE TELL ME THIS STORY ISN'T A LONG ONE!

I TRIED TO IMAGINE IT A CROWD OF HIPPO-CHICKEN GHOST ZOMBIES, MADE OF AN UNHOLY BLEND OF THE GHOSTS OF BOTH THEIR BONES AND ALL MANNER OF POOP GLEEFULLY HUNTING DOWN ANYONE TRYING TO LEAVE THROUGH THE GATE BEHIND THEM.
ASIDE FROM FIGURING THAT THE GATE SIGN SHOULD READ "THEY GET US" AND HOPING THAT MAX'S CLIENT AND HIS MATE FOUND A WAY PAST THEM, I DECIDED TO SAVE MY IMAGINATION FOR FIGHTING THE CHICKEN INSTEAD

YOUR UNDERSTANDING, WHILE SIMPLISTIC, IS CORRECT. THE PROPER SPIRIT FOR SUCH AN UNDERTAKING MUST FIT THE NATURE OF THE IMAGINED THING. IF THE BOY'S STUFFED TIGER CAN BE FOUND, IT WILL BE SUITABLE FOR A WARRIOR SPIRIT CAPABLE AGAINST THE CHICKEN
HOW DO WE FIND HIM?

HE IS EITHER IN THE LIVING WORLD OR IN THE GHOST REALM WHERE YOU ARE, DEPENDING ON WHETHER HE WAS DESTROYED OR NOT. A SIMPLE SUMMONING SPELL WILL CALL HIM TO YOU, EITHER WAY.

SO WE NEED TO LOOK ONE OF THOSE SPELLS UP?

AT LEAST NOW WE REALLY KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR! IT'S JUST A MATTER OF CALLING UPON THE RIGHT WARRIOR SPIRIT!

WE ALSO HAVE TO MAKE SURE IT'S ON THE RIGHT SIDE!

I'M NOT SURE WHAT YOU MEAN. HIS DOCTORS' CALLING PATIENTS WHO COULDN'T WORK "USELESS EATERS," HIS BELIEF IN THE PURITY AND SUPREMACY OF HIS OWN FOLLOWERS ABOVE ALL OTHERS, HIS CLAIMING OWNERSHIP OF NUMBERS, AND SO ON.

SO THE SPIRIT WE SUMMON NEEDS TO BE ON OUR SIDE AS WELL AS AGAINST THE CHICKEN GOD'S SIDE. I GET IT.

WE'LL ALSO HAVE TO FIND AN EMPTY ROOM TO SUMMON IT NOT HERE.

WE STILL HAVE A LOT TO LEARN ABOUT EACH OTHER. IT'S JUST, AFTER THE GOBLINS WERE ENSLAVED, SO MANY NON GOBLINS DON'T KNOW THEIR WAYS AT ALL... AND

THEY DESERVE BETTER. RIGHT!

ZAR'NA SHOULD KNOW IT ALREADY, FROM HER STUDIES IN THE DUNGEON LIBRARY.

WHO'S THAT? ANOTHER GOBLIN?

THE SHAMAN MEANS ME THAT'S MY HONORARY GOBLIN NAME. THANK YOU, SHAMAN FOR YOUR KNOWLEDGE.

THAT'S WHY ERIS TRIED TO TELL ME ABOUT THINGS YOU'D LOOKED UP!

MAY IT SERVE YOU WELL, ZAR'NA. THE WARRIOR SPIRIT YOU NEED, YOU WILL HAVE TO FIND ON YOUR OWN. MY INTERVENTION MUST BE MINIMAL SO AS TO NOT BEND THE PROPHECY IN UNDESIRABLE WAYS AS YOU HUMANS SAY. GOOD LUCK TO YOU, AND FAREWELL.

AND WITH THAT HIS IMAGE FADED WE WERE ON OUR OWN AGAIN.

SHOULDN'T ONE POSING THE CHICKEN BE ENOUGH?

COMMON ENEMIES DON'T ALWAYS MAKE FRIENDS. THE CHICKEN HAD ONE GROUP LIKE THAT WHO RIVALED HIM.

I REMEMBER ENOUGH OF THE SUMMONING SPELL THAT I CAN USE IT, BUT YOU HAVE TO TELL ME ENOUGH ABOUT HOBSES FIRST.

CAN DO, BUT WHO RIVALED THE CHICKEN OTHER THAN THE OLD TRINITY?

ANOTHER TOTALITARIAN GOVERNMENT OBSESSED WITH WIPE OUT ALL UNDESIRABLES. THE CHICKEN DESPSED THEM FOR VALING HIM, BUT HE ADAPTED A LOT OF THEIR TERMINOLOGY AND MINDSET. HE DIDN'T TAKE THEIR METHODS, BUT ONLY BECAUSE HE PREFERRED HIS OWN!

THE CHICK WHISTLES WERE THE IDEA?

THEY CALLED THEM DOG WHISTLES, BUT YES.

THERE WAS A PICTURE IN ONE OF MY TEXTBOOKS AT SCHOOL I NEVER UNDERSTOOD.

WHAT WAS IT?

CALVIN IT WAS A BUNCH OF PEOPLE IN WEIRD MILITARY-LOOKING OUTFITS, WITH A BLURRED PICTURE OF THE CHICKEN SWINGING HIS AXE AT THEM. ACCORDING TO THE CAPTION, HE WAS CHOPPING EACH OF THEM UP INTO EXACTLY ONE THOUSAND, FOUR HUNDRED EIGHTY-EIGHT PIECES EACH WHILE SCREAMING, "IT'S MINE NOW!"

MAX THAT WAS THEM, AND THAT NUMBER WAS ONE OF THEIR DOG WHISTLES. HE TURNED ALL THEIR PIECES INTO CONCRETE THAT HE USED TO MAKE THE WALLS AROUND HIS HELL. AND THEY'RE ALL STUCK LIKE THAT, UNABLE TO DO ANYTHING BUT SILENTLY RADIATE THEIR COLLECTIVE EVIL AURA.

IT WAS IRONIC. THEY'D TALKED ABOUT BUILDING WALLS TO KEEP THEIR UNDESIRABLES OUT, BUT THEY NEVER THOUGHT THEIR BODIES AND SOULS WOULD BECOME A WALL TO KEEP THE CHICKEN'S UNDESIRABLES IN.

IT SERVES THEM RIGHT!

ALSO, I'LL HAVE TO TEACH YOU HOW TO PROPERLY ADDRESS THE SHAMAN YOU WEREN'T BAD, BUT YOU NEED TO BE BETTER.

WHY? I'M NOT AN ADOPTED GOBLIN OR GREMLIN OR WHATEVER!

HE'S ORCHESTRATING OUR BEING HERE. MAX WAS BETTER, BUT STILL NOT PERFECT.

I USED HIS PROPER TITLE! HE ALSO NEEDS THE PROPER HONORIFICS!

I'VE DEALT WITH HIM BEFORE, REMEMBER, AND HE KNOWS I MEAN NO DISRESPECT. BESIDES, HE SHOULD LEARN THAT NOT ALL HUMANS BELIEVE IN LUCK! AMITABHA AND HIS BROTHERS SAY EVERYTHING HAS A CAUSE, AND THE TIGHMANITES SAY THERE'S ONLY THE DIVINE MADNESS! NEITHER OF THEM BELIEVE IN LUCK AT ALL!

AND THEY'LL GET BETTER AS SOON AS WE TAKE THE CHICKEN DOWN! WHAT WOULD YOU CALL THE TRAITOR SHAMAN, THOUGH?

GHIMZLROS? HE'S GHIMZLROS. MAY HIS NAME LIVE IN INFAMY. ZURLINGS WHO FOLLOWED HIM GET NO HONORIFCS OR NAMES.

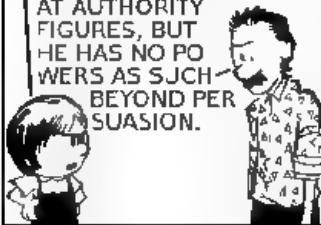
THAT'S AWFULLY LONG! WHY NOT POOP HEAD GHIMZLROS, GIVEN HIS MASTER THE CHICKEN'S FASCINATION WITH IT?

CAN WE GET BACK TO RESEARCHING?

AS COOL AS GOBLINS CAN BE, WE PROBABLY SHOULD. DID YOU FIND ANYTHING INTERESTING WHILE WE WERE LOOKING STUFF UP EARLIER?

A FEW THINGS, BUT THEY'RE EXAMPLES OF WHAT NOT TO USE!

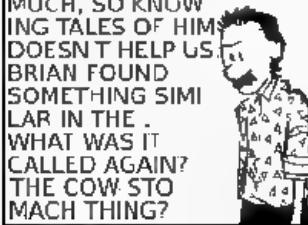
LIKE WHAT? LOOKED UP WHAT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE ANCIENT TIBETAN WISDOM AND FOUND UNCLE TOMPA. HE'S NOT BAD IF YOU'RE AIMING HIM AT AUTHORITY FIGURES, BUT HE HAS NO POWERS AS SUCH BEYOND PERSUASION.



HE ONCE DROPPED POOP IN HIS KING'S LAP AND THEN CONVINCED HIM THAT IT WAS MAGICAL POOP FROM HEAVEN THAT WOULD GIVE HIM THE BEST LUCK EVER IF HE ATE PART OF IT, AND THE ONLY TIME HE REALLY HELPED ANYONE OTHER THAN HIMSELF WAS AN INCIDENT WHERE SOME CROPS GOT TRANSFORMED



INTO SOME NON EDIBLE THINGS, AND HE SOLD THEM TO A BUNCH OF NUNS TO GET THE CROP FARMERS THEIR MONEY BACK AND MORE. HE ALSO DOESN'T LEAVE TIBET MUCH, SO KNOWING TALES OF HIM DOESN'T HELP US. BRIAN FOUND SOMETHING SIMILAR IN THE - WHAT WAS IT CALLED AGAIN? THE COW STOMACH THING?



AND SORRY IF I'M GETTING SNIPPY, BUT I CAN ONLY HANDLE SO MUCH RESEARCH AT ONE TIME, AND I WANT TO GET THIS OVER WITH.



THE CREATURE I FOUND WAS THE BUTATSCH CUN ILGS. A GIANT COW STOMACH COVERED IN EYEBALLS THAT CAN EITHER HYPNOTIZE OTHERS OR SHOOT BEAMS OF FIRE. IT IS STRONG ENOUGH TO GOUGE ITS WAY THROUGH SOLID ROCK, AND IT HAS A DISTINCTIVE ROAR. IT IS FROM THE CENTER OF THE EARTH JUST BELOW SWITZERLAND. OFFICIAL RECORDS ONLY MENTION ONE, BUT I



WAS ABLE TO DE-CRYPT UNOFFICIAL RECORDS OF MORE.

THE OTHERS ARE USED AS GUARDS FOR TOP-SECRET MAGICAL ARTIFACTS IN SWITZERLAND, AND MAGICALLY BOUND TO BE SUCH EVEN IF THE SPIRIT OF ONE WAS WILLING TO HELP US, IT NOT BE FREE TO DO SO.



THE ARTIFACTS ARE SO IMPORTANT THAT THE GHOSTS OF DEAD B.C.I.'S ARE STILL BOUND TO SERVICE.

IT'S A GOOD THING YOUR GIFT FOR LANGUAGES HELPS YOU PRONOUNCE THAT NAME! ALSO, A MIRRORING OF A STUFFED TIGER AND THAT WOULD BE UNPREDICTABLE!



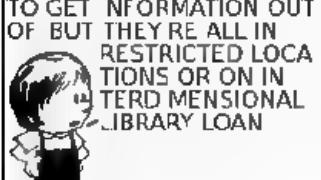
BUT REALLY COOL IN A GROSS WAY!

SO SOME OF US WERE ON THE RIGHT TRACK EVEN BEFORE WE KNEW WHAT WE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE LOOKING FOR, WHICH DOES HELP.



SUSIE, DID YOU FIND ANYTHING WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO USE?

I FIGURED I'D LOOK INTO BOOK BASED SOLUTIONS. SINCE WE'RE IN A LIBRARY THE CHICKEN DON'T JUST BURN ORDINARY BOOKS, HE ALSO BURNED AGRIPPAS MASSIVE LIVING BOOKS THAT YOU HAVE TO LITERALLY FIGHT TO GET INFORMATION OUT OF BUT THEY'RE ALL IN RESTRICTED LOCATIONS OR ON INFINITE DIMENSIONAL LIBRARY LOAN

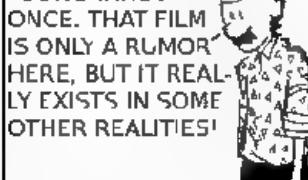


AND SOME OF THE AGRIPPAS MIGHT WANT REVENGE ON THE CHICKEN, SO GOOD THINKING. BUT GETTING ONE VIA INFINITE DIMENSIONAL LIBRARY LOAN WILL LIKELY TAKE GODS KNOW HOW LONG!

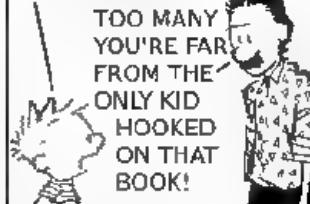


WHAT'S THAT?

CHECKING OUT MEDIA FROM OTHER REALITIES, ESPECIALLY FOR THINGS THAT DON'T EXIST IN YOUR OWN. I KNOW HOW LONG IT TAKES BECAUSE I WANTED TO SEE "GONCHAROV" ONCE. THAT FILM IS ONLY A RUMOR HERE, BUT IT REALLY EXISTS IN SOME OTHER REALITIES!

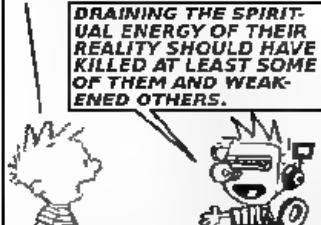


IT MAKES ME WONDER HOW MANY DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF "HAMSTER HIVE AND THE GOOEY KABLOOIE" THERE ARE IN THE MULTIVERSE!



TOO MANY. YOU'RE FAR FROM THE ONLY KID HOOKED ON THAT BOOK!

AND SPEAKING OF THE MULTIVERSE, WERE YOUR EVER GODS EVER DEFEATED, BRIAN, OR ARE THEY STILL DOING DAMAGE IN WHAT'S LEFT OF YOUR ORIGINAL REALITY?



DRAINING THE SPIRITUAL ENERGY OF THEIR REALITY SHOULD HAVE KILLED AT LEAST SOME OF THEM AND WEAKENED OTHERS.

THEY MAY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ADAPT, BUT I DO NOT KNOW FOR CERTAIN. IN ANY CASE, THE COLLATERAL DAMAGE FROM DOING SUCH A THING TO ANY REALITY IS TOO HIGH A PRICE.



ALL OF HIS GODS PAID THAT PRICE, TOO!

INDEED, IT MAY ALSO HAVE FREED SOME UNJUSTLY IMPRISONED BY OUR EVIL GODS. BAD FORTUNE CAN CHANGE QUICKLY, OR AS ONE OF OUR PROVERBS PUTS IT,



...ERS ARE WILLING

WE HAVE A PROPHECY ON OUR SIDE, SO THAT POWER IS WILLING! IT'S NOT JUST HOPING FOR THE BEST!



BUT WHAT DO WE DO TO FIND THE SPIRIT WE NEED?

YOU'D THINK WE'D HAVE FOUND SOMETHING CLOSE TO IT WITH THE GODS AND PROPHECY HELPING! I KNOW THEY'RE NOT ALL STRAIGHTFORWARD BUT IT WOULD BE NICE IF THEY'D GIVE US A HINT!



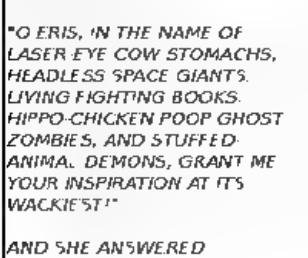
WHAT ISN'T THAT A SLIP OF THE TONGUE?

ERIS! RIGHT! IF THERE WAS A TIME I NEEDED HER GUIDANCE, IT'D BE NOW! IT'S COOL TO LEARN ABOUT THE BIGGER WORLD OUT THERE, BUT WE HAVE CHICKEN TO FRY!



IS THERE A MEDITATION TECHNIQUE OR SOME THING YOU USE TO TALK TO HER?

THERE WAS A WAY OF CHANNELING MY INNER WEIRDNESS. AND THE RESEARCH WE'D DONE HAD HELPED. I STILL REMEMBER HOW I STARTED THE CHANNELING



"O ERIS, IN THE NAME OF LASER EYE COW STOMACHS, HEADLESS SPACE GIANTS, LIVING FIGHTING BOOKS, HIPPO-CHICKEN POOP GHOST ZOMBIES, AND STUFFED ANIMAL DEMONS, GRANT ME YOUR INSPIRATION AT ITS WACKIEST!"

AND SHE ANSWERED

SHE SAYS, "TAKE THE FIFTH, AND HAVE A ONE-EYED WINTER" SO STUFFED ANIMAL DEMONS ARE THE KEY?



ALONG WITH SNOW DEMONS, IT SOUNDS LIKE!

SHE ALSO SAYS, "EAT A WALL BURGER! IT'S ON ME!" I GUESS MY EXTRADIMENSIONAL AUNT WALBURGA'S ELDritch TALENTS APPLY TO ME, TOO?

THAT'D BE MY GUESS!

THE ONLY STUFF I'VE HEARD ABOUT ELDritch THINGS ARE SARANNA'S COMMENTS ON GOBLINS WHO DEAL WITH OTHER POWERS. BUT I SUPPOSE THERE'S MORE TO THEM?

YES, WE DEFINITELY NEED TO KNOW MORE!

ALL MY KNOWLEDGE OF ELDritch THINGS IS GOBLIN RELATED, AND SUSIE'S KNOWLEDGE OF THEM IS NONEXISTENT. IF YOU DON'T COUNT WHAT SHE GOT FROM MY MEMORIES BUT NOW WE KNOW RIGHT WHERE TO GO IN THIS LIBRARY!

IT WAS FORTUNATE THAT THE POOP-RELATED RESEARCH DIDN'T PAN OUT, SINCE I DIDN'T TRUST ANYTHING THE CHICKEN WAS OBSESSED WITH. UNCLE TOMPA SEEMED UNRELIABLE. ANOTHER BOOK I'D READ HERE WAS ABOUT AN EARLY PRO-CHICKEN MOVEMENT WHERE A BUNCH OF PEOPLE BROKE INTO A GOVERNMENT BUILDING AND MURDERED ANYONE WHO TRIED TO STOP THEM. A FEW POOPED ON THE FLOOR TO GET THE CHICKEN'S FAVOR, BUT THEY WERE ALL ARRESTED. AND WHEN THE CHICKEN FREED THEM TO MAKE HIMSELF LOOK GOOD, MOST OF THEM GOT LOCKED UP AGAIN FOR OTHER CRIMES DUE TO LACK OF SELF CONTROL. AS THE BOOK PUT IT, "POOP CAN'T FIX STUPID." SO... NO POOP FOR ME.

AFTER SOME MUCH MORE PRODUCTIVE RESEARCH IN THE ELDritch HORROR RESEARCH WING (WHO KNEW THE SUBJECT WAS POPULAR ENOUGH TO NEED AN ENTIRE WING?) WE FINALLY HAD NOTES ON THE RIGHT RITUAL, WHICH WOULD SUMMON THE KIND OF SPIRIT WE NEEDED

SOME OF THE INSTRUCTIONS IN HERE SOUND LIKE THINGS I'VE SEEN IN MUSIC VIDEOS WHEN DAD WASN'T LOOKING!

DID YOU MISS THE END OF THE BOOK THAT TALKED ABOUT HOW SOME ELDritch CREATURES ARE AMUSED BY TRIPPY MUSIC VIDEOS AND SUMMON THEMSELVES FOR IMITATORS WITH THE RIGHT MIND-SET?

I THNK I DID' THE CHICKEN GETS IT BACKWARDS'

AS HE DOES WHENEVER IT'S TO HIS ADVANTAGE! I HAVE NO IDEA HOW WEARING A FOX MASK AND COVERING YOURSELF IN PURPLE LIQUID IS SUPPOSED TO BE AMUSING. BUT AN ELDritch CREATURE'S TASTES ARE A MYSTERY TO ME! AS LONG AS IT GETS THE CREATURE TO COME, I'M NOT GOING TO OBJECT!

AND MAYBE THE CREATURE JUST COMES ON ITS OWN, REGARDLESS, AND ASKS, "GEEZ, I GOTTA HAVE A REASON FOR EVERYTHING!" I REMEMBER THE BOOK THAT POINTED THAT OUT, AT LEAST!

WE'LL FIND OUT WHEN WE TRY SUMMONING IT!

AT LEAST IT MAKES SENSE THAT ELDritch CREATURES SUMMON THEMSELVES! IF OTHERS COULD SUMMON THEM, THE CHICKEN COULD STOP OR KILL THEM!

EXCEPT FOR THE ONES POWERFUL ENOUGH TO RESIST EVEN GODS!

BUT WE'RE STARTING OFF SLOW. A SPIRIT CAPABLE OF MELTING WITH A STUFFED TIGER, WHICH SHOULD BE AN ORDINARY CELESTIAL, DEMON, OR FEY WHO'S TAPPED INTO SOME ELDritch POWER.

THE CHICKEN CAN'T EASILY RESIST! IF WE UNDERSTAND THINGS RIGHT!

IT WAS MAKING MY HEAD SPIN, AND MY BLADDER ACHED. NO, WAIT, THAT SECOND PART WAS SOMETHING ELSE

BEFORE WE DO THIS, DOES ANYONE ELSE HAVE TO GO? IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE MCZAR GALD'S!

AND WITH THAT, ANOTHER SHORT TRIP WAS IN ORDER

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, SO DO I DO ANY OF YOU GHOSTS NEED TO? OR IS THAT SOMETHING GHOSTS DON'T DO? AND WHAT ABOUT ROBOTS?

WE GHOSTS DON'T NEED TO, SINCE WE DON'T NEED TO EAT. EITHER BRIAN DOES NEED TO EVACUATE SOMETIMES, SINCE HE'S STILL A PHYSICAL BEING. SO WHILE THERE ARE GHOSTS OF PEOPLE TURNED INTO GHOSTS OF POOP, AND GHOSTS OF POOP ITSELF DUE TO ANIMISM, THERE IS NO GHOST POOP.

INTERESTING. IF A BIT MUCH FOR THE TIME I HAD ONLY ONE OTHER QUESTION

THE SAME APPLIES TO PEE, THEN?

YES.

OKAY LET'S GO!

WE PASSED SOME OTHER LIBRARY PATRONS SOME LIVING SOME NOT, ON THE WAY THERE THERE WERE SO MANY SPECIES



WHICH ALSO MEANT THERE WERE SO MANY BATHROOM TYPES FOR ALL THOSE SPECIES THAT THINGS GOT DESPERATE

I MAY AS WELL EVACUATE. ALL ONI-TYPE BATHROOMS THAT BOTH I AND YOU TWO MAMMALS COULD USE ARE TAKEN, HOWEVER.

WHAT DO WE DO, THEN?!



I WILL TRANSFORM MY ANATOMY TO MATCH ONE OF THE AVAILABLE BATHROOMS. THE FIRE ELEMENTAL-TYPE BATHROOM IS SUITABLE. RECONFIGURING TO EVACUATE PLASMA... DONE. I WILL HELP YOU BOTH AS SOON AS I FINISH.



AN EXIT LEADING OUTSIDE IS RIGHT THERE. IF IT GETS BAD ENOUGH, COULDN'T WE JUST DUCK OUT INTO A PLACE NO ONE'S WATCHING?

MY VISION SAYS THAT'S A BAD IDEA

SARANNA, THERE'S AN 86% CHANCE WE'LL GET CAUGHT BY THE SECURITY SYSTEM NEAR THE LIBRARY AND THE PICTURE IT TAKES OF YOU PEEING WILL SPREAD LIKE WILDFIRE, ESPECIALLY AFTER SOMEONE EDITS IT TO GIVE YOU A WICKED GRIN. YOU'LL END UP BEST KNOWN IN THIS PLANE FOR ILLICIT PEEING AND, WORSE, THE CHICKEN GOD WILL USE THAT TO DISCREDIT YOU!

CALVIN, WHAT PHILISTINES WOULD BE THAT OBSESSED WITH MY PEEING ON THINGS? BUT I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN

I AM BACK. THERE IS A POSTED NOTICE OF A NEWLY OPENED TYPE OF BATHROOM: ONE FOR SANITATION HOMUNCULI, WHO ONLY EXCRETE LIQUID. IF YOU TWO WILL BE DOING JUST THAT, YOU CAN USE IT WHILE I STAND GUARD, SINCE IT IS UNOCCUPIED.



I SHOULD HAVE BEEN CONFIDENT, SEEING AS HOW I'D JUST SUCCESSFULLY DONE MAGIC, BUT I HAD A FEW MOMENTS OF DOUBT



THIS RITUAL WAS MUCH MORE COMPLEX, AND REQUIRED MAKING A DEAL WITH WHATEVER ELDITCH ENTITY WAS WILLING TO HELP

WHAT KIND OF LOON CAME UP WITH THE MUSIC VIDEO THAT INSPIRED THE RITUAL? AND WHAT PROOF DID I HAVE THAT IT WOULD WORK THE SAME WAY?

AND AS FOR MAKING DEALS, I KNEW FROM EXPERIENCE WITH DAD (AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, MOM) HOW THOSE WORKED.

AND MOM'S VERSION OF ALL THAT WAS "IF YOU ASK FOR IT YOU DON'T GET IT," AFTER WHICH SHE'D JUMP TO THE LAST STAGE TOO. BOTH OF THEM THOUGHT THEY HAD NO OBLIGATIONS ONLY LEVER AGE EXCEPT WHEN PEOPLE WITH AUTHORITY OVER THEM MADE THEM MEET THEIR OBLIGATIONS. UNCLE MAX'S STORY OF THE FIRST LIBERTY TOWN WAS THE SAME BEHAVIOR WRIT LARGE

CHEATED AGAIN!



THE THREAT OF FINANCIAL RUIN WAS ONE THING THAT KEPT THEM IN LINE. SOME WHAT THEY NEVER COMPLAINED ABOUT CAPITALISM THOUGH. TO DO SO WAS ANTI-CHICKEN, BECAUSE HE FAVERED THE RICH SO MUCH. BUT I'D OVERHEARD A FEW PEOPLE DO IT WHEN THEY THOUGHT I WASN'T LISTENING. THE QUESTION REMAINED: HOW MANY WERE TRULY ON MY SIDE, AND HOW MANY WERE ONLY PRETENDING DUE TO SOME THREAT TO THEM OR SOME PRESSURE ON THEM? I FOUND SOME NEW FRIENDS, BUT HOW MANY WERE ACTUALLY FRIENDS? THE SAME APPLIED TO WHO EVER OR WHATEVER I CHOSE TO SUMMON.

NO, I NEEDED TO BE BRAVE ENOUGH TO AT LEAST TRY AND IT WASN'T FAIR TO CALL ANY ONE A LOON, BECAUSE MAGIC WAS CRAZY BY DEFINITION AND IT WAS SUPREMELY INSULTING TO CALL ANYONE A BIRD NAME. GIVEN WHO OUR ENEMIES WERE, THERE WERE EVEN CRAZIER RITUALS OUT THERE THAN THIS ONE I WAS ABOUT TO ATTEMPT.

I SUCCEDED ONCE, AND I CAN DO IT AGAIN! GRANT ME STRENGTH!

DAD WOULD FIRST SAY HE'D DO SOMETHING, BUT HE'D PUT IT OFF.

I DIDN'T SAY 'ID DO IT' I SAID I MIGHT DO IT!

THEN HE'D TREAT IT AS LEVER AGE. IF I BROUGHT UP THAT HE SAID HE'D DO IT BY A CERTAIN TIME THAT WAS GETTING AWFULLY CLOSE

TRYING TO FORCE ME? I'LL WAIT LONGER OR NOT DO IT AT ALL!

AND THEN IF HE GOT ANGRY ENOUGH (HE'D CALL IT "BEING PASSIONATE") AND A GOOD THING WHEN HE DID IT, AND CALL IT "HAVING AN ATTITUDE" AND A BAD THING IF I EVER DID IT, HE'D DROP ALL PRETENSE

I DON'T HAVE TO DO IT! HOW ABOUT IF I NEVER DO IT?!

AND IF I DID EVERYTHING TO AVOID SETTING HIM OFF, AND HE JUST HAPPENED TO BE IN A BAD MOOD THAT DAY, HE'D JUMP STRAIGHT TO THAT LAST STAGE, REGARDLESS. HOW MANY OTHERS WITH AUTHORITY WOULD ACT THE SAME WAY?

FROM POSING NEAR TEN DEAD OCTOPUSES TO RITUALLY "SERVING THE TOILET WITH THE LIBATION OF MY DEFECATION" (THE LATTER ONLY ONCE I OVERCAME MY LUMBERCHICKEN INDUCED AVersion TO POOP), THERE WERE SO MANY RITUALS I LEARNED AND DID, AND THIS WAS ONLY THE SECOND ONE. I JUST HAD TO GET OUT OF MY HEAD AND ACTUALLY DO IT



I DON'T REMEMBER WHO I WAS ASKING FOR STRENGTH. MY NON-CHICKENIST FAMILY (SUSIE AND SARAH) AND ALL OF THE ENTITIES I'D WORKED WITH (MAYBE AMITABA OR AMITAYUS) WOULD MAKE AN EXCEPTION TO HIS USUAL PACIFISM, GIVEN THE MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF HARM THE CHICKEN AND HIS AGENTS WERE DOING?), BUT IT WORKED.

CALVIN? CALVIN! ... I'M READY NOW!

I JUST NEEDED A MINUTE TO PSYCH MYSELF UP AGAIN

GOOD BECAUSE WE'RE ALL READY TO SUPPORT YOU!

THAT WAS THE MOST REASSURING OF ALL!

MY BEST FRIEND WOULD SOON BE VISIBLE TO EVERYONE. HE'D GET ENOUGH POWER TO HELP PUT AN END TO THE CHICKEN, AND THEN MAYBE WE COULD ALL JUST LIVE OUR LIVES NORMALLY AGAIN OR AT LEAST FOR A WHILE

I'M HERE TO SUPPORT YOU, TOO! I WISH I HADN'T BEEN AWAY SO LONG!

THAT WAS THE MOST REASSURING OF ALL!

AND WITH THAT, I BEGAN THERE WAS STILL DANGER (I'D ONLY REACHED OUT TO THE FLYING SPACETTI MONSTER BECAUSE HE COULDN'T RAN DOMLY TURN MY FOOD INTO PASTA IF I WERE DEAD AT THE CHICKEN'S HANDS), BUT ALL THE RESEARCH WE'D DONE SAID IT WOULD BE A REASONABLE LEVEL OF DANGER

REVEAL TO ME A WARRIOR FREE, SUITABLE FOR A TIGER OF FANTASY!



IT WAS SUPPOSED TO SUMMON A COMPATIBLE SPIRIT WITHOUT SPECIFYING WHO IT WAS. THE NAMED ONES ALL SEEMED TO HAVE MAJOR PROBLEMS. TAKE "SOLEGO THE CHAOS GOD, IMMORTAL MASTER OF THE WORLD." HE DIDN'T SOUND LIKE HE USED CREATIVE CHAOS AT ALL, AND FOR A SO-CALLED MASTER OF THE WORLD, HE WASN'T ACTUALLY RULING IT, SO HE OBVIOUSLY HAD SOME MAJOR WEAKNESS STOPPING HIM FROM DOING SO. THIS RITUAL WAS NO MICKEY MOUSE OPERATION.

REALITY WAVERED AGAIN, AS IT HAD WHEN I'D SUMMONED HOBSES, AND A CREATURE LOOKING LIKE A BLOB WITH A TOOTHY EYEBALL AND HORNS APPEARED

IT SPOKE TELEPATHICALLY TO ME

GREETINGS. YOU ARE THE PROPHESIED ONE, OR SO I HEAR.

THAT WAS THE MOST REASSURING OF ALL!

I ANSWERED TELEPATHICALLY BUT ALSO SPOKE MY WORDS OUT LOUD SO THE OTHERS KNEW WHAT WAS GOING ON

I AM ARE YOU A FRIEND OF MINE AND A FRIEND OF MY TIGER'S, AS WELL AS AN ENEMY OF THE LUMBERCHICKEN?



I CAN BE. THAT GOBLIN IS NOT THE ONLY ONE WATCHING YOU.

AND BOTH THE GOBLINS AND MY KIND ARE ENSLAVED BY THE CHICKEN.

I BROKE MY BONDS BY TAPPING INTO ELDITCH POWER. YOU ARE DOING THE SAME NOW.

THAT WAS THE MOST REASSURING OF ALL!

I REPEATED ITS HALF OF THE CONVERSATION FOR EVERY ONE ELSE, AND THEN I CONTINUED

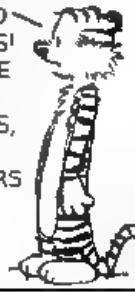
WHAT'S YOUR NAME? I'M CALVIN, A HUMAN WHO'S TIRED OF BEING RULED BY AN EVIL GOD WHO ANSWERS TO NO ONE!



I'M ZHUPARR, A DEMON TIRED OF THE SAME AND CURIOUS ABOUT OTHER PERSPECTIVES!



AND I'M HOBBS, A TIGER WHO WANTS TO BE ABLE TO DO MORE IN THIS WORLD BOTH FOR MY BEST FRIEND AND OTHERS! YOU CAN SEE ME THE WAY CALVIN DOES, SO YOU CAN MAKE OTHERS DO IT TOO!



I'VE ALWAYS LIKED THE COLOR ORANGE! LET US JOIN FORCES!



BEFORE WE DO THAT, WHAT DO YOU MEAN THAT THERE ARE OTHERS WATCHING ME?



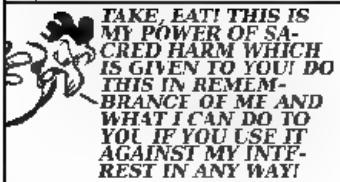
IT'LL BE FASTER IF I SHOW YOU. YOUR OTHER FRIEND WITH THE EYE CAN VERIFY IT.



THE VISION IT SHOWED ME WAS HORRIFYING



AFTER THE CHICKEN TURNED THE BIG FOUR DOCTORS INTO POOP GHOSTS AND TOOK OVER THEIR DUTIES FOR AWHILE, HE DECIDED HE HAD BETTER THINGS TO DO AND DELEGATED HIS AUTHORITY TO KEEP HIS REPLACEMENT MASS MURDERERS FROM TURNING ON HIM. HE HAD THEM EAT DEMONS THAT HE'D TURNED INTO WORMS AND MIND-CONTROLLED THE VAST MAJORITY OF ZHUPARR'S PEOPLE



MY LAST HEALERS TURNED ON ME, BUT YOU WILL NOT! WORMS EAT A BIT OF MY NEW AGENTS' BRAINS! IF THEY TURN ON ME, EAT ALL OF THEIR BRAINS! AGENTS. YOUR TASK IS TO CHANGE ALL REPROBATE PEOPLE FROM BEING ALIVE PEOPLE TO BEING DEAD PEOPLE, TO PURIFY MY WORLD! IF YOU CAN CAUSE EXTRA PAIN IN THE PROCESS, THEN ALWAYS DO SO! AND DO NOT FAIL ME!



I RAN THIS BY THE OTHERS, AND BOTH UNCLE MAX AND SARANNA CONFIRMED IT. I KNEW ABOUT HIS DELEGATING HEALTH CARE TO NEW PEOPLE, BECAUSE HE'S GOTTEN LAZY! I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE WORMS, BUT IT FITS HIS NEW PEOPLE'S ERRATIC BEHAVIOR!



AFTER LEARNING ABOUT THE CHICKEN'S MASS SLAUGHTER AFTER QUADPOOP DAY, I DID NOTICE SOME ODD COMMENTS ABOUT WORMS, BUT I D DNT LOOK AT IT IN MORE DETAIL UNTIL NOW! SO A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE GETTING LOCKED UP, TORTURED AND KILLED AT THE BEHEST OF PEOPLE WITH WORM EATEN BRAINS?



AND ENSLAVED WORMS AT THAT? WHY DOESN'T HE JUST USE BRAIN WASHED AGENTS AS HEALERS? NOT THAT THAT'S ANY BETTER!



THAT IS ONLY THE FIRST PART. THERE IS STILL MORE.



THE VISION CONTINUED FOCUSING ON SEVERAL OF THE WORMS WHO ESCAPED THE FULL GROUP WHILE THE CHICKEN GLOATED, AND THEN ON ONE IN PARTICULAR THAT WAS ZHUPARR

THAT CHICKEN DOESN'T HAVE A CLEW, OR AT LEAST NOT A FULL ONE! THE OTHERS ARE GOING THEIR OWN WAYS. WHAT'S THAT I SENSE?



ZHUPARR WAS APPARENTLY A PUNSTER (AS A CLEW WAS A GROUP OF WORMS), BUT ALSO HAD THE SAME KIND OF SPIRITUAL SENSITIVITY THAT I DID. IT MADE A DEAL WITH "THE NAMELESS NAME," GOD OF OBSCURE PRONOUNS, TO GET OUT OF WORM FORM AND GAIN SOME POWER BACK. AND WHEN MY SENSES WERE GOING CRAZY DUE TO THE GOBLINS' OPENING THE PORTAL TO THE GHOST REALM, ZHUPARR'S WERE TOO. THAT "ALMOST TIME" WAS IT SPEAKING AND THE PORTAL ATTRACTED THE ATTENTION OF A FEW OTHERS

A GOD OF OBSCURE PRONOUNS COULD DO THAT! I GUESS "THE NAMELESS NAME" REALLY HOLDS A GRUDGE AGAINST THE CHICKEN FOR HIS PRONOUN ABOLITION MONTH!



HE ABOLISHED PRONOUNS FOR A MONTH?



CALVIN HAVE NO IDEA WHY DAD WAS ALL "THE HOLY LUMBERCHICKEN" SAYS THAT THE HOLY LUMBERCHICKEN WILL PUNISH ALL WHO REFER TO THE HOLY LUMBERCHICKEN BY ANYTHING OTHER THAN THE HOLY LUMBERCHICKEN'S FULL TITLE! AND DAD WILL PUNISH CALVIN MORE FOR BOTH BETRAYING THE HOLY LUMBERCHICKEN AND CALVIN'S FATHER!" AND THEN THE CHICKEN DROPPED IT A MONTH LATER. NOW HE USES PRONOUNS, BUT PRETENDS HE DOESN'T IF ANYONE BRINGS IT UP

IT WAS ALL A MOUTHFUL I COULD UNDERSTAND TILES, SINCE NO ONE PAID MUCH ATTENTION WHEN I DECIDED I'D CHANGE TO "CALVIN THE BOLD," BUT BANNING AN ENTIRE PART OF SPEECH?



MY PRONOUNS ARE A SACRED MYSTERY. THEY ARE POWERFUL.



WHAT DOES THAT MEAN? I'VE BEEN THINKING OF YOU AS IT' BECAUSE I DIDN T KNOW BETTER, AND YOU DIDN'T CORRECT ME! IS "THE NAMELESS NAME" GOING TO BE AFTER ME NOW?



RELAX. YOU DIDN'T KNOW, AND NEITHER I NOR MY GOD ARE SO EASILY OFFENDED.



IT/ITS WORKS, BECAUSE MY TRUE PRONOUNS ARE SACRED AND WILL LIGHT YOUR DARKEST HOUR!



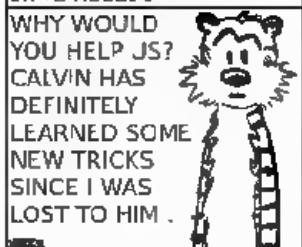
I REMEMBER THE BACKLASH FROM PRONOUN ABOLITION MONTH! SOME PEOPLE STARTED USING "PRONOUN" AS A SWEAR WORD, LIKE "PRONOUN YOU, YOU PRONOUNING PRONOUNER!" ALTHOUGH IT WAS NEVER COMMON ENOUGH TO HAVE A COMMANDMENT AGAINST IT



FASCINATING. I WAS BUSY LEARNING THE POWER OF SIX AT THAT TIME.



AFTER ANOTHER BREAK TO TELL THE OTHERS ZHUPARR'S HALF OF THE CONVERSATION (TELEPATHY WAS COOL BUT IT WAS GIVING ME A HEADACHE) I TURNED THINGS OVER TO HOBSES



BUT ASIDE FROM CURIOSITY AND VENGEANCE AGAINST THE CHICKEN FOR TURNING YOU AND YOUR PEOPLE INTO WORMS, WHAT DO YOU GET OUT OF THIS DEAL? IF WE MERGE AND YOU TURN ON CALVIN, I'LL FIGHT YOU!



I'VE NEVER BEEN FRIENDS WITH MORTALS BEFORE. I'D LIKE TO BE!



AND A MALE TIGER FORM IS MOST INTERESTING COMPARED TO WHAT I AM!



AS FLATTERED AS I AM BY THAT, WHY? IS THAT AMOEBA FORM YOUR NATURAL ONE? AND WHY DOES YOUR RITUAL REQUIRE PURPLE LIQUID IF YOU REALLY LIKE THE COLOR ORANGE?



ZHUPARR, I AM AN AMOEBA DEMON, BUT THE TEETH AND HORNS WERE CHANGES WROUGHT BY MY ELDRITCH POWER AND OF ALL THE WEIRDNESS HERE YOU OBJECT TO MY HAVING MORE THAN ONE FAVORITE COLOR? I LIKE PURPLE, ORANGE AND ONE COLOR I'VE ONLY BEEN ABLE TO SEE SINCE MY ELDRITCH TRANSFORMATION. GLEMZARIC, IT IS BEYOND THE SIGHT OF MOST. MAYBE YOUR ROBOT FRIEND CAN RECALIBRATE HIS VISION IN ORDER TO SEE IT? BEIDES, I'LL BE ABLE TO DO ONE VERY IMPORTANT THING AS A TIGER. HOBSES, WHAT'S THAT?

ZHUPARR, WEAR HATS THAT BREAK THE CHICKEN'S MANY COMMANDMENTS!



AND THAT LED TO ANOTHER FLASHBACK A FEW YEARS LATER

THERE'S A COMMANDMENT 32748 BANNING WEARING SOMBREROS? MAYBE THEY'RE COOLER THAN I THOUGHT! AND COMMANDMENT 32749 BANS WEARING NEON MAGENTA SOMBREROS WITH GOOGLY EYES? WHAT'S UP WITH THAT?

NO, IT'S A SEPARATE THING. LET ME TRY TO SHOW YOU WHAT IT IS...



I CAN SEE IT IN YOUR MIND! I'LL FINALLY GET TO WEAR A SOMBRERO!



I SHUDDERED AT THE THOUGHT OF THE CHICKEN'S HAVING MORE SLAVES. THE CHICKEN BRAINWASHED BUTT PEOPLE, THE BUTT VICE-ROY BRAINWASHED ORDINARY PEOPLE. THE CAVE GOBLINS, THE GUN GNOMES (WILLING SLAVES COUNTED). THE AMOEBA DEMONS TURNED BRAIN-EATING WORMS, POSSIBLY SOME OF THE ORCS THAT SARANNIA HAD TALKED ABOUT (AFTER SEEING THE ONE IN THE RESTAURANT, I THOUGHT I'D SEEN AT LEAST ONE IN THE DUNGEON, BUT THEY DIDN'T EAT WITH US FOR WHATEVER REASON). THERE WERE JUST TOO MANY BUT THIS DEAL TO KEEP THE CHICKEN FROM MAKING MORE SEEMED FITTING, AND HOBSES APPROVED IT.

THIS WARRIOR AGAINST THE CHICKEN HAD SOME ODD REASNING BUT HE SHOWED PROMISE. I ONLY HAD ONE MORE QUESTION

HOBSES AND I BOTH AGREE YOU CAN WEAR ALL THE CHICKEN DEFYING HEADWEAR YOU LIKE. BUT WHAT IS THIS POWER OF SIX YOU'VE TALKED ABOUT? IS IT RELATED TO YOUR SECRET PRONOUNS?



THE OTHERS WATCHED WHILE WE'RE WAITING TO HEAR THE NEXT PART OF THE DEAL, DOES ANYONE HAVE ANYTHING INTERESTING TO TALK ABOUT?



I CHECKED THE MOST RECENT LIST OF COMMANDMENTS. THE ONE YOU MENTIONED ABOUT NOT CHANGING THE LYRICS TO CHICKMAS CAROLS FOR FUN IS 69419. THE ONE RIGHT AFTER IT, 69420, BANS BLEEPING OUT RANDOM WORDS IN SONGS TO MAKE THEM SOUND MORE OBSCENE.



HUH! I BROKE THAT SECOND ONE IN HIGH SCHOOL MJSIC CLASS WHEN WE WATCHED "THE KING AND I," WITH THAT "WHENEVER I FEEL AFRAID" SONG! "WHENEVER I FEEL *BLEEP*, I HOLD MY *BLEEP* ERECT!"



MY COUSIN WOULD COMPLAIN IF ANYONE TALKED ABOUT ERECTING THINGS OR ERECTIONS, SAYING IT WAS INDECENT. I DON'T KNOW WHY SHE HAD SUCH A PROBLEM WITH BUILDINGS, THOUGH!



ALL THE COMMANDMENTS YOU HAD TO DEAL WITH CONSTANTLY ARE RIDICULOUS! ONE OF THE FEW I HAD TO DEAL WITH WAS 79521, WHICH SAYS THE NAME SHIRI IS ONLY FOR FEMALE BUTT PEOPLE SERVING THE HOLY LUMBERCHICKEN! (ONE OF MY CLASSMATES HAD A BABY SISTER.)

THAT IS IN COMMANDMENTS 79487 THROUGH 79715, ALL DEVOTED TO USAGE AND SPELLING OF NAMES. OTHERS IN IT INCLUDE 79647, WHICH BANS THE SPELLING OF "MISSY" AS "MYSSIE" AND A NON-SEQUENTIAL BAN ON TWENTY-THREE DIFFERENT SPELLINGS OF "DARYL."



I DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD SPELL IT THAT MANY WAYS! AS FOR BUTT PEOPLE NAMES, I KNOW THEY BREED TRUE, SOMEHOW, BUT HOW MANY OF THEM ARE THERE NOW? ...WAIT, CALVIN'S STIRRING AGAIN, AND HE LOOKS LIKE HE HAS QUESTIONS FOR US!



ZHUPARR SHOWED ME A VISION DEMONSTRATING ITS POWERS, SINCE WE CAN'T VERY WELL SHOW THEM OFF IN A LIBRARY THEY LOOK GOOD, BUT DOES ANYONE KNOW WHAT DYNAMIC ELEMENTAL INCURSION IS, JUST SO I UNDERSTAND IT?



SHAMAN GHEFZARAL MENTIONED IT ONCE WHEN HE WAS TELLING ME ABOUT ADVANCED MAGICAL TECHNIQUES IT'S TAPPING INTO MULTIPLE GROUPS OF MAGICAL ELEMENTS AT ONCE, INSTEAD OF BEING LIMITED TO ONLY ONE GROUP OF THEM

OKAY, NOW I GET IT! ZHUPARR TALKED ABOUT THE INDO EUROPEAN ELEMENTS, THE CHINESE ELEMENTS, AND THE DISCORDIAN ELEMENTS, AND WHAT IT SHOWED ME LINES UP WITH ITS PULLING FROM ALL THREE OF THEM!



INDO EUROPEAN IS EARTH, WATER, FIRE, AIR, AND ELEMENT OR VOID CHINESE IS EARTH, WATER, FIRE, WOOD, AND METAL. I FORGET THE DISCORDIAN.

SWEET, BOOM, PUNGENT, PRICKLE, AND ORANGE!



THE POWER OF SIX THAT ZHUPARR SAYS IT HAS IS THE USE OF TWO ELEMENTS EACH FROM THOSE THREE GROUPS AIR AND VOID, WOOD AND METAL AND BOOM AND PRICKLE! IT CAN SPAWN OR CONTROL THEM!



SO IT'S LIKE REPLICANT! A ROBOT FROM THAT MOVIE I WASN'T ALLOWED TO WATCH? NO, THE COMIC CHARACTER THE ONE ROGUE ARMY! TONY GAMBIT WITH ALL THE POWERS OF HIS COOL UNCLE'S THE FLASH ROGUES!

WELL, EXCEPT FOR THE PART WHERE HE WENT CRAZY, AND WITHOUT HIS TECHNICALLY BEING ON THE SIDE OF THE VILLAINS! BUT ACCORDING TO THE CHICKEN, WE'RE ALL VILLAINS ANYWAY FOR OPPANDING HIM!



ZHUPARR WANTED TO USE ORANGE AS ONE OF ITS DISCORDIAN ELEMENTS, BUT IS IT TRUE THAT THERE WAS A PRO-CHICKEN POLITICAL MOVEMENT THAT TRIED TO CLAIM THE COLOR ORANGE AS ITS OWN?



YES, BUT IT WAS BRIEF AND THE COLOR ALWAYS LOOKED MORE GOLDEN BROWN TO ME ANYWAY THEY WERE ALSO OBSESSED WITH THEIR ENEMIES BEING AWAKE, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT? ONE ALTERNATE REALITY HAD THEM GET AHOULD OF A MONKEY'S PAW AND WASH THE ENTIRE PLANET INTO A MASS COMA!



THAT'S WHY THEN ZHUPARR LOOKED INTO THE INDIANTHENE HERESY BRANCH OF DISCORDIANISM, WHERE THE ORANGE ELEMENT WAS REPLACED WITH BLUE, AND THE SETTING ORANGE DAY OF THE WEEK WAS REPLACED WITH RISING BLUEBERRY, BUT THE BLUEBERRY BASED POWERS DIDN'T THRILL IT

BY THE TIME THAT GROUP STOPPED HIJACKING ORANGE IT'D ALREADY GONE WITH BOOM TO BLOW THINGS UP INSTEAD OF ORANGE TO BIND PEOPLE WITH GIANTIC ORANGE PEELS



AND NOW THAT IT'S ALL CLEARED UP, ZHUPARR AND HOBBS CAN PUT THE HEADS TOGETHER. LET'S SEE HOW THIS STUFF REALLY WORKS!



WE ARE ONE!



WE ARE ONE!



WHOAH! THIS BODY OF OURS MINE IS SO DIFFERENT! AND YET IT FITS!



I'LL HAVE TO HIDE MY DEMONIC NATURE FOR NOW! CALL ME ZHUPARR HOBBS OR SUPER-HOBBS!

EVERYONE, MEET SUPER-HOBBS! AND CALL ME CALVIN THE ELDritch CULTIST!



SO THIS IS HOW YOU SEE YOUR STUFFED TIGER! HELLO, HOBSES, OR SUPER HOBSES! SJSIE'S MEMORIES MENTION YOU ENOUGH THAT I CAN PULL THEM UP EAS LY, ALTHOUGH I'M STILL PROCESSING MOST OF THEM!



H, SUPER HOBSES! YOU MAKE ME WANT TO FIND MR BUN AND SEE IF I CAN MAKE HIM VISIBLE TO EVERYBODY ELSE THE SAME WAY!



GREETINGS TO YOU, SUPER-HOBSES! I DID NOT HAVE A ROBOTIC TIGER COMPANION IN MY ORIGINAL REALITY, BUT IT DIVERGED SIGNIFICANTLY FROM THIS ONE BEFORE IT WAS DESTROYED. IF YOU ARE A FRIEND TO HIM, YOU ARE A FRIEND TO ME AS WELL!



WOW! HELLO, SUPER-HOBSES! YOU REALLY DO HAVE MANDIBLES OF DEATH AND A KILLER'S EYE! AS LONG AS YOU ONLY USE THEM AGAINST THE CHICKEN AND HIS ALLIES, JUST LIKE TIFFANY DOES!



A DOOR BURST OPEN

HELLO, ZHUPARR, AND HELLO, HOBSES! YOU BOTH HAVE PASSED MY ENHANCED HOSTILITY CHECK, AS WELL AS MY STANDARD ONE THAT I DO FOR ALL SUMMONS! AT LEAST THE PROPHECY TOLD ME YOU'D BE COMING, SO I HAD THE PAPERWORK DONE IN ADVANCE!



I LIKE GREETING NEW SUMMONS PERSONALLY! SAVE YOUR POWERS FOR YALDABA-AWK, OR YOU'LL SEE WHAT MY POWERS ARE LIKE! GOOD LUCK IN YOUR FIGHT!



THANK YOU, EVERYBODY! AND YES, MA'AM! NO ONE WHO'S SMART ANTAGONIZES ON I WE BOTH KNOW THAT NOW!



AND THAT IS TIFFANY!

AFTER TIFFANY LEFT

IT'S ALL WORKING OUT! WHICH IS GOOD, BUT WE STILL HAVE A WAYS TO GO TO PROPERLY FIGHT THE CHICKEN GOD! WAIT, YOUR EYEPATCH SWITCHED AGAIN!



THE MAGIC HOLDING US HERE IS WEAKENING AGAIN! WE SHOULD PROBABLY WRAP THINGS UP!



IN WHICH CASE, SINCE CALVIN IS AN ALTERNATE VERSION OF ME, I CAN USE MY ANSIBLE TO ESTABLISH A PSYCHIC CONNECTION WITH HIM, JUST AS I HAVE DONE WITH SEYMOUR. GIVE ME A MOMENT TO DO THE APPROPRIATE SCAN.. DONE!



AND WE SHOJLD GET TO LIBERATING CALVIN AND SARANNA BEFORE IT WEAKENS MORE, JUST IN CASE SOMETHING GOES WRONG! EVERYONE FOLLOW ME TO THE WISHING CARPET!



ON THE WAY THERE

HOW DOES THE PSYCHIC CONNECTION WORK?

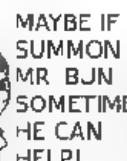
MUCH LIKE A MENTAL PHONE CALL YOU CAN PICK UP, IT CAN ALSO WORK AS AN EMERGENCY BEACON IF THE SITUATION IS BAD ENOUGH, SUCH AS THE CHICKEN.



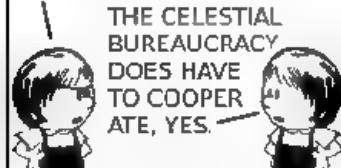
AND SINCE I'M POWERED PARTLY BY CALVIN'S IMAGINATION, I SHOULD BE ABLE TO MAKE A CONNECTION LIKE THAT TOO! I'LL HAVE TO PRACTICE!



I WISH THERE WAS A WAY FOR US TO KEEP IN TOUCH! HAVING YOUR MEMORIES ISN'T THE SAME, EVEN AFTER I FINALLY PROCESS THEM ALL!



ASSUMING YOU CAN FIND AND THE ELDR TCH BEING TO MAKE HIM REAL TO EVERYBODY? I HOPE TIFFANY LETS IT THROUGH!



THERE...

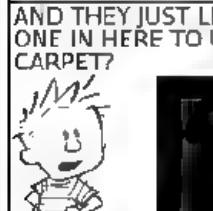
IT LOOKS JUST LIKE A NORMAL CARPET!



I KNOW, BUT THERE'S A REASON IT'S IN THIS BUILDING SURROUNDED BY A MAGICAL AURA VISIBLE EVEN TO AMATEURS!



IT LOOKED LIKE A NEON GLOW TO ME, REMINISCENT OF THE LAVA LAMP IMAGE THAT BRIAN HAD SHOWN DURING THE RITUAL (WHICH REMINDED ME LAVA LAMPS WERE COOL AND I NEEDED TO GET A REAL ONE FOR BOTH AESTHETIC AND RITUAL PURPOSES)



AND THEY JUST LET ANYONE IN HERE TO USE THE CARPET?

IT HAS A BUNCH OF PRESERVATION SPELLS ON IT TO KEEP IT FROM BEING DAMAGED OR DESTROYED, AND ANYONE WHO USES IT NEEDS SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF WHERE TO GO, UNLESS THEY ONLY WANT TO GO TO CERTAIN PUBLIC LOCATIONS! AND I HAVE THE RIGHT SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE WE NEED!



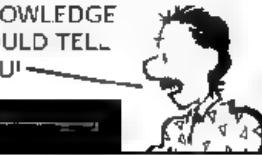
THERE'S A BUL
LETIN BOARD
WITH A BUNCH
OF PAPERS
STUCK TO IT!
HOW MANY
PEOPLE COME
HERE?



AND THERE ARE
SO MANY PAPERS!
LOOK AT THIS NO-
TICE SAYING
"READ WHAT'S ON
THE OTHER SIDE
OF THIS AND YOU
OWE ME \$100 000
AND YOUR LIFE"



PUBLIC TRAVEL MEANS
PUBLIC NOTICES AND
THAT NOTICE IS BY SOME
PRANKSTER. A ONE SIDED
GEAS WITH NO ENFORCE-
MENT PARAMETERS LIKE
THAT WON'T WORK, AS
ANYONE WITH SUFFI-
ICIENT MAG CAL
KNOWLEDGE COULD TELL
YOU!



WHICH THE GOB-
LINS DID! AND
WHAT'S WITH THE
MULTICOLORED
PANELING ALL OV-
ER THE PLACE?



I'M READY! SO AM I!



I DON'T KNOW
WHETHER I
SHOULD GO TOO!
YOU SHOULD,
JUST IN CASE!



GIVE ME A SECOND TO
THINK OF THE PASS-
PHRASE AND WISH US
ALL THERE. SUSIE,
BRIAN, WE WON'T BE
LONG!



SEE YOU SOON!

MAY YOUR LIB-
MATION DO
WELL, AS OURS
DO!



I THOUGHT WE'D BE SENT
TO ANOTHER CITY! WHY
ARE WE OUTSIDE ON
WHATEVER WORLD THE
CEL'D NOS MOVED TO?



SECU-
RITY?
THAT MAKES SOME
SENSE. IF A HOS-
TILE FORCE TRIED
TO GET IN, THEY'D
BE KEPT FAR AWAY
FROM EVERYONE!



THIS IS WHERE
IT SENT EVERY
ONE LAST TIME
FOLLOW ME!



WE'RE
RIGHT
BEHIND
YOU!

UNCLE MAX LED US TO A LIGHTED TENT IN THE DISTANCE. IT WAS MUCH BIGGER ON THE INSIDE.

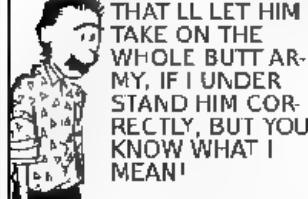


WE FINALLY GET TO PUT
A FACE TO SIMON MAGUSSAURUS' COOLNESS!
AND THIS TENT
EVEN LETS
GHOSTS IN!

I DON'T KNOW MUCH
MORE THAN WHAT YOU
FILLED ME IN ON DURING
THE WALK HERE, PLUS
OUR COMBINED
KNOWLEDGE, BUT
I'M CURIOUS,
TOO



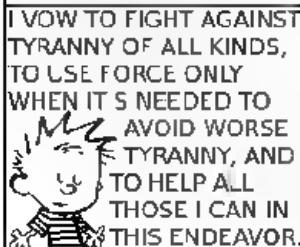
GREETINGS, MAGUS! I'M
BACK YET AGAIN, AND I
HAVE THE LAST FEW PEO-
PLE INVOLVED WITH THE
PROPHECY WITH ME!
WELL, ONE'S ACTUALLY A
TIGER-PERSON WITH EL-
DITCH POWERS
THAT LL LET HIM
TAKE ON THE
WHOLE BUTT AR-
MY, IF I UNDER-
STAND HIM COR-
RECTLY, BUT YOU
KNOW WHAT I
MEAN!



YOU HAVE GOOD TIMING, BE
CAUSE YOUR CHARGES TIME
HERE IS SHORT! THE MAGIC
HOLDING THEM HERE W LL
NOT HOLD MUCH LONGER! I
WISH WE COULD PROPERLY
CATCH UP, BUT IT IS NOT
TO BE NOT NOW!



LOOKING BACK THE VOWS WE
THREE TOOK WERE A BLUR.
WE'D AGREED ON THE SAME
ONES, AT LEAST. WE DIFFERED
ON WHICH ARBITRARY RULE
TO BREAK AS PART OF THOSE
SAME VOWS, BUT WE HAD
A TON OF OPTIONS THERE.



I VOW TO FIGHT AGAINST
TYRANNY OF ALL KINDS,
TO USE FORCE ONLY
WHEN IT'S NEEDED TO
AVOID WORSE
TYRANNY, AND
TO HELP ALL
THOSE I CAN IN
THIS ENDEAVOR.

I W LL ADVANCE THE
CAUSE OF IMAGINATION,
AND SPREAD CREATIVE
CHAOS TO IMPROVE THE
WORLD. AND IF LAVA
LAMPS ARE BANNED, I
WILL RETURN ON PRIN-
CIPLE FOR THIS I ATTAIN
GNOSIS



WELL, SARANNA SAID "CREATIVITY" RATHER THAN "CREATIVE
CHAOS." BUT THE REST WAS THE SAME. AFTER MY VOWS, I NO LONGER
HAD TO WONDER WHAT DINOSAUR ERIS LOOKED LIKE!



WHOO! CREA-
TIVITY FOR
THE WIN! I
DRESSED UP
FOR THIS OC
CATION! I
CAN'T WAIT TO
SEE WHAT
YOU LL DO
WITH YOUR
NEW POWER!

SARANNA WAS MORE CONFIDENT IN HER VOWS THAN I WAS

AND IF THERE'S EVER A BAN ON PUTTING RANCH DRESSING ON SPICY TOPOKKI, I WILL RETURN ON PRINCIPLE FOR THIS I ATTAIN GNOSIS.



I FOUND OUT LATER THAT TOPOKKI WAS A RICE CAKE NOODLE DISH A LOT OF THE GOBLINS LIKED, AND WHICH SARANNA HAD EATEN WITH THEM A FEW TIMES. SHE'D INTRODUCED THEM TO RANCH DRESSING WHEN SHE COULDN'T HANDLE ITS SPICE LEVEL

ALSO, THIS RITUAL WAS SUPERFICIALLY SIMILAR TO THE RITUAL THAT THE GOBLINS USED TO OFFICIALLY MAKE HER AN HONORARY GREMLIN WHICH IS WHY SHE TOOK IT IN STRIDE

I WAS AT LEAST REASSURED BY SEEING ERIS IN ANOTHER FORM. I WONDERED HOW SUPER HOBSES WAS HOLDING UP

POST GNOSIS VERTIGO IS WORSE WHEN IT'S FOR TWO, EVEN IF ONLY ONE OF US NEEDED IT!



IT TURNED OUT THAT HOBSES WAS LIBERATED ALREADY BECAUSE I'D PUT HIM IN THAT FORM INSTEAD OF THE CHICKEN ZHUPARR WAS LIKELY LIBERATED BY ITS ELDRITCH POWER, BUT IT WENT THROUGH THE RITUAL JUST IN CASE, MUCH LIKE BRIAN

IT IS DONE! YOU ALL SHOULD RECOVER SOON FROM THE EXPERIENCE, AS MAX DID



WE WERE IN THE MIDDLE OF RECOVERING WHEN SHAMAN GHEZARAL APPEARED AGAIN APPARENTLY THE MAGUS HAD BEEN RIGHT ABOUT THE MAGIC'S WEARING THIN

GOOD, YOU HAVE SUMMONED WHO YOU NEEDED TO SUMMON, AND YOU ARE LIBERATED. ZARB IS UNABLE TO HOLD THE SPELL MUCH LONGER.



NOTHING ELSE ESSENTIAL REMAINS. I RECOMMEND YOU RETURN WITHIN THE NEXT TWO MINUTES, BECAUSE THE SPELL WILL HOLD FOR NO MORE THAN FIVE



IT'LL TAKE ABOUT FIVE MINUTES TO GET BACK TO THE WISHING CARPET, EVEN IF WE RUN! I'LL HAVE TO TELL EVERYONE ELSE GOODBYE FOR YOU!

SUPER HOBSES CAN USE HIS VOID POWER TO WRINKLE SPACE TIME AND TELEPORT BUT NO ONE ELSE CAN!

HOW WILL SUPER HOBSES RETURN WITH JS? HE DOESN'T HAVE A LANYARD OF RETURNING!

WE ACCOUNTED FOR THIS. HERE IS A SPARE LANYARD, COURTESY OF ZARB. CATCH!



I'LL SEE YOU AGAIN THE NEXT TIME THE BARRIER BETWEEN PLANES WEAKENS NATURALLY, WHICH SHOULD BE AROUND HALLOWEEN! UNLESS YOU FIGURE OUT ANOTHER WAY BEFORE THEN!



I'LL MISS YOU, UNCLE MAX!

I'LL MISS YOU TOO! WE'RE NOT RELATED, BUT THIS HAS BEEN GOOD!



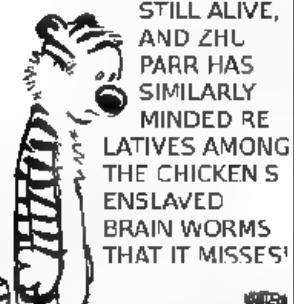
I'LL MISS YOU BOTH TOO! AT LEAST THE GOBLINS CAN HELP YOU AND, SPEAKING OF BONDS, IF YOU EVER FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO KRALTA, WOULD YOU LET ME KNOW?



YOU SAID THAT WAS A MATTER OF GOBLIN SECURITY, SO AS LONG AS FINDING OUT DOESN'T BREAK THAT! REAL FRIENDS ARE HARD TO FIND, I KNOW!

YOU HAVE BRIAN AND SUSIE! WE'LL MISS THEM, TOO!

I'LL MISS YOU, TOO! I REMEMBER YOUR LAST VISIT WHEN YOU WERE STILL ALIVE, AND ZHUPARR HAS SIMILARLY MINDED RELATIVES AMONG THE CHICKEN'S ENSLAVED BRAIN WORMS THAT IT MISSES!



IT'S STILL WEIRD HAVING TWO PEOPLE IN MY HEAD OUR HEAD!

SAME FOR SOMEONE ELSE'S MEMORIES!



THANKS, EVERYBODY! I WISH THAT SUPER HOBSES COULD HAVE GOTTEN TO KNOW BRIAN AND SUSIE, TOO!



WE'LL MEET AGAIN SOMETIME AND REMEDY THAT!

AND AFTER THE WAR'S OVER, ZHUPARR CAN INTRODUCE YOU TO ITS RELATIVES, ONCE THEY'RE ALL FREED

IF YOU THREE ARE ALL READY, I WILL MANUALLY PULL YOU BACK NOW. YOU STILL NEED TIME TO RECOVER, BUT WE CAN PASS IT OFF AS A BRIEF ILLNESS AND USE IT AS COVER TO DEBRIEF YOU.



WHY DO WE NEED TO BE DEBRIEFED?

WE MUST BE CERTAIN THAT YOU UNDERSTAND ALL THAT YOU NEED TO.

WHAT ABOUT THE GUIDE WE NEED?



THE ONE THE PROPHECY SPEAKS OF? WE HAVE ARRANGED FOR ONE, WHOM WE WILL COVER IN YOUR DEBRIEFING. FEAR NOT.

IF YOU SAY SO!



I'M READY!

I AM READY, SHAMAN

I'M READY, TOO! I'LL HAVE TO HIDE WHEN I ARRIVE



AS THE GHOST PLANE BEGAN TO WAVE AND SHIMMER AROUND US, I THOUGHT OF ALL WE'D LEARNED HERE. IT'D BEEN HOURS, BUT IT FELT LIKE MONTHS.

AS UNFORTUNATE AS THEY WERE TO BE ENSLAVED BY THE CHICKEN, THE GOBLINS HAD AT LEAST KEPT A LOT OF THEMSELVES AFTERWARD. THE CHICKEN WAS GETTING CRAZIER, BUT HE HADN'T QUITE GONE OFF THE DEEP END YET.

KNOWING THAT ESCAPE FROM THEIR BONDS VIA ELDritch POWER WAS A COMPLEX BUSINESS, ONE THAT IRREPARABLY WARPED MOST OF THOSE WHO TRIED IT, MADE ME APPRECIATE HOW FORTUNATE I WAS TO NOT BE ENSLAVED AND TO HAVE DEALT WITH SOMEONE LIKE ZHUPARR.

EVIL ELDritch BEINGS WOULD ENSLAVE YOU AND MUTATE YOU INTO A WORSE FORM. AN ALTERNATE VERSION OF ME HAD LEARNED THAT THE HARD WAY, AS I FOUND OUT A FEW YEARS LATER.



WHO IS THIS CALVIN?

ELDRITCH BEINGS FROM XORIAT WERE BAD NEWS.

THE RIFT'S SOUNDLESS SCREECH WAS NOW LITTLE MORE THAN A WHISPER.



WE MADE IT! WE'RE BACK! STILL DIZZY

THANK YOU FOR YOUR WORK, ZARB!

YOU'RE WELCOME! TIME HAS STARTED FLOWING AGAIN FOR EVERYONE OTHER THAN ME, SHAMAN GHEEZARAL, AND YOU THREE. NOW FOLLOW ME TO THE INFIRMIARY! YOUR GLIDE AWAITS!



IN TIFFANY'S OFFICE

GOOD IT'S RESOLVED, AND I ONLY HAVE TO DO A LITTLE MORE PAPERWORK. I MUST ALSO PREPARE! WE FINALLY GET TO OPENLY GO TO WAR WITH YALDABAAWK!

MEGA



CHECKING MY MAIL... THERE'S A NEW BRANCH OF DREM-VALAAR'S WITNESSES: THE UNIFIED D.W.'S THAT BELIEVE THAT DREMVALAAR IS HALF-NON-EXISTENT AND HALF POOP.



AND THEY FIGHT OVER WHETHER THE LEFT SIDE IS NON-EXISTENT AND THE RIGHT SIDE IS POOP, OR VICE VERSA! I'LL NEED TO HIRE MORE SECURITY GUARDS!



I HAVE ENOUGH LOGISTICS TO WORRY ABOUT WITH-OUT MORE BRAWLING! "YOU'VE PUT HALF-POOP- DREMVALAAR'S NON-EXISTENCE ON THE WRONG SIDE!" WHAT BUNKUM!



IN BETTER NEWS, THE ANTI-CHICKEN GROUPS READY TO BREAK ALL HIS ANTI-SEX COMMANDMENTS AND ALL HIS ANTI-BLASPHEMY COMMANDMENTS ARE READY!



SOME OF THEM HAVE JOINED FORCES! YALDABA-AWK WILL BE DEFEATED NOT JUST WITH ORGIES AND BLASPHEMY, BUT WITH BLASPHEMOUS ORGIES! JOY!



NOW THE GOBLINS MUST DO THEIR PART FOR THE PROPHECY IN THE REALM OF THE LIVING! DESPITE THEIR BONDAGE, THEY'RE STRONG, AND THEY WILL PROVE THAT!

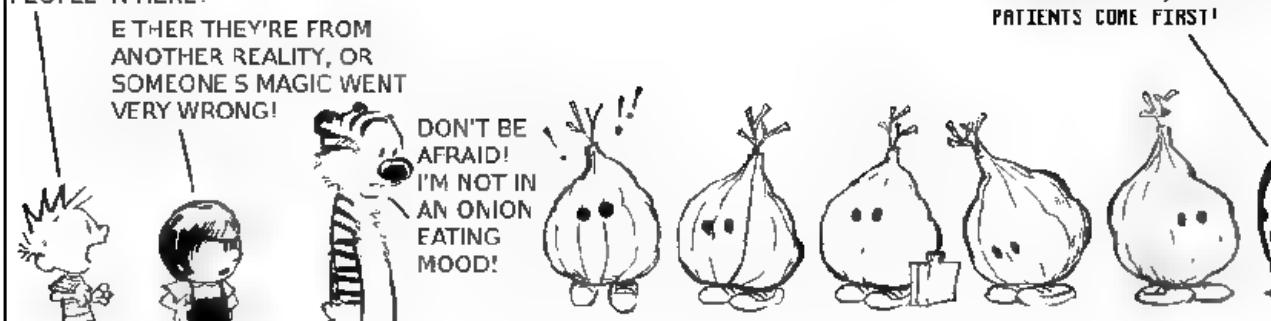


IN THE GOBLINS INFIRMIARY ANOTHER DIMENSIONAL RIFT HAS OPENED, BRINGING PEOPLE THE CHICKEN CAN'T EAT WITHOUT TROUBLE, AND THE BUTT VICEROY CAN'T BRAIN WASH IT'S A PERFECT OPPORTUNITY FOR HEALER GHOLZOMPUS!



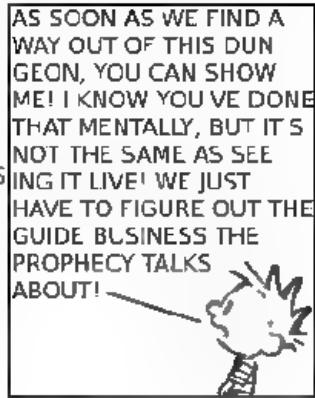
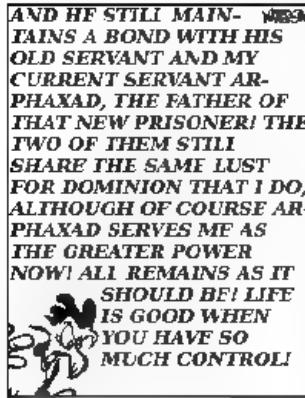
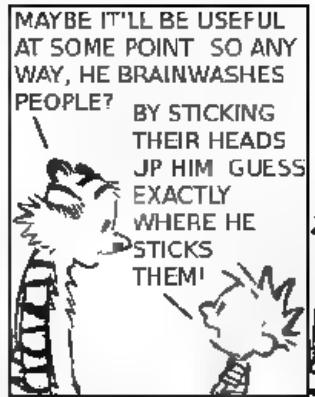
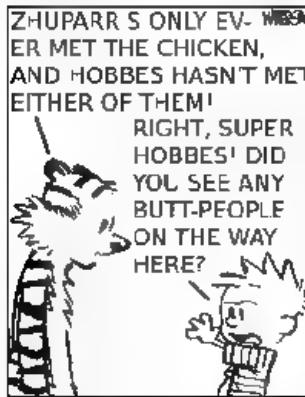
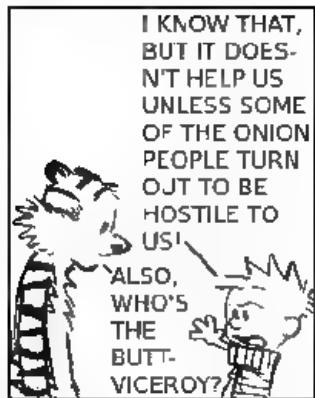
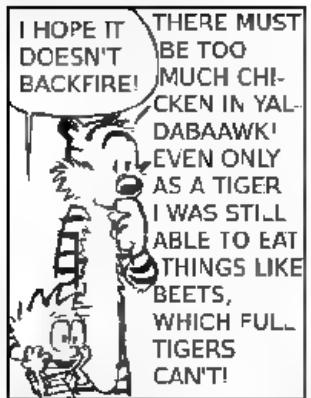
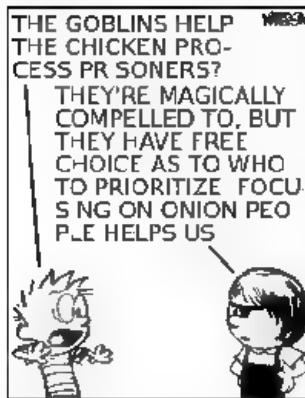
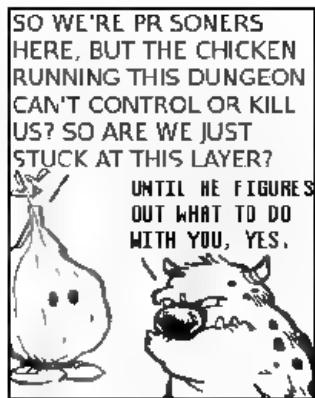
WHAT'S UP WITH ALL THE ONION PEOPLE IN HERE?

ETHER THEY'RE FROM ANOTHER REALITY, OR SOMEONE'S MAGIC WENT VERY WRONG!



DON'T BE AFRAID! I'M NOT IN AN ONION EATING MOOD!

I AM HEALER GHOLZOMPUS. I WILL BE WITH YOU SHORTLY. PROPHECY OR NOT, MY NEW PATIENTS COME FIRST!



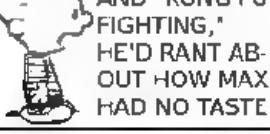
IT'S NOT JUST THE
ON ON PEOPLE! THERE'S
BEEN TALK OVER THE
LAST WEEK THAT THE
CHICKEN'S AGENTS HAVE
CAPTURED SEVERAL
ORCS, INCLUDING JABEZ
STONETUSK, THE LEADER
OF THE KOTEK CLAN!
HE'LL BE EVEN
MORE ENRAGED
BY HAVING BOTH
ORCS AND ON ON
PEOPLE AROUND!



ESPECIALLY THE KOTEK
CLAN, BECAUSE THEY
BREAK TWO COMMAND-
MENTS. 1111, WHICH
BANS WEARING MIXED
FABRIC PATTERNS, AND
9758, WHICH BANS DIS-
CO MUSIC AND ANY
THING INFLUENCED BY IT
AS THE WORST OF
ABOMINATIONS.
THEIR SKILL AT
DISCO DANCING
IS LEGENDARY!



BACK IN THE DAYS OF
THE OLD TRINITY, DAD
WOULD GO OFF ABOUT
HOW HE HATED DISCO
MUSIC! BUT, SOMEHOW,
HE STILL LIKED THAT
"TARZAN BOY" SONG!
AND IF HE'D KNOWN ABOUT
UNCLE MAX AND "KUNG FU
FIGHTING," HE'D RANT AB-
OUT HOW MAX HAD NO TASTE!



AND I THOUGHT
JSING "QUASAR"
AS A SWEAR
WORD WAS THE
WORST OF ABOM
NATIONS!
THERE ARE AT LEAST
THREE MORE COM-
MANDMENTS THAT
FALL IN
THAT CA
TEGORY!



UNCLE MAX WAS LU-
CKY THE COMMANDMENT
AGAINST DISCO HADN'T
BEEN MADE YET DURING
THE H C A V INCIDENT!
DEFINITELY! ALTHOUGH
MOST COMMANDMENTS
ARE ONLY ENFORCED
CONSISTENTLY IF THE
CHICKEN HAS IT IN FOR
YOU!



BUT ENOUGH ABOUT
THAT HEALER GHOL
ZOMPLUS AND ZIF LOOK
LIKE THEY'RE ALMOST
DONE WITH THE ONION
PEOPLE. ALTHOUGH ZIF
LOOKS AS THOUGH HE'S
ABOUT TO GIVE US BAD
NEWS!



ZAR'NA IS CORRECT.
YOUR
GLIDE WILL BE DELAYED UN-
TIL TOMORROW NIGHT DUE TO
AN UNFORESEEN TECHNICAL
PROBLEM: THERE ARE NOT
ENOUGH ZARNIUM-COATED
PARTS AVAILABLE WITHOUT
HAVING TO
MAGICALLY
CREATE
THEM. IT
MAKES AN
INTERESTING
PUN, AT
LEAST!



WHAT'S ZARNIJM,
ANYWAY?
AN ALCHEMICAL
SUBSTANCE THE
GOBLINS USE TO
MAKE THINGS IN-
VISIBLE TO
MOST FORMS
OF SIGHT.



HEALER GHOLZOMPLUS IS
INFORMING THE CHICKEN THAT
YOU AND THE BOY...
HE'S NO OFFICIAL
GREMLIN, BUT CALL
HIM ZALV'N. HE'S
HELPING US ALL.



FINE. . . . YOU AND ZALV'N
HAVE COME DOWN WITH A MI-
NOR ILLNESS THAT REQUIRES
YOU TO BE ISOLATED FOR A
FEW WEEKS AT MINIMUM.
THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH
TIME FOR YOU TO DO WHAT
YOU NEED TO DO.



AFTER DE-
BRIEFING.
THANK
YOU, ZIF

YES ZUNG WILL BE HERE IN
A MINUTE TO DEBRIEF YOU
AND MAKE SURE YOU UNDER-
STAND ALL THAT YOU SHOULD
DO BEFORE YOU FILLFILL THE
PROPHECY.



DON'T KNOW ENOUGH
TO BE SURE WHETHER I
WANT TO BE AN OFFICIAL
GREMLIN IT SEEMS TO
HAVE WORKED FOR YOU,
BUT I'LL AT LEAST
TEACH YOU TO
ADDRESS THEM
PROPERLY! AND
THEY ALSO
NEED TO
DO BET-
TER THAN
"THE BOY!"



THE DEBRIEFING WENT
WELL. SARANNA AND
TOLD THEM WHAT WE'D
LEARNED FROM THE
GHOSTS AND BRIAN.
THEN IT GOT MORE IN-
TERESTING
WE HAVE DONE OUR
BEST TO ACCOMMODATE
YOUR VISION. WHAT IT
LIKELY
MEANS?



GOING FAR ENOUGH INTO
SPACE WILL GET YOU OUT OF
RANGE OF THE CHICKEN AND
HIS ARCHONS. "BOB" IS UN-
ABLE TO HELP, UNFORTUNATE-
LY. BOB WAS A PASSENGER
ON THEIR CRAFT, WITH NO
ENGINEERING SKILLS.



THAT CRAFT WAS SIGNI-
FICANTLY DAMAGED, ANYWAY.
THERE WAS ONE OTHER OUR
FELLOW GREMLINS WERE ABLE
TO REPAIR.
LESS TALENT FOR
GOBLIN MAGIC
MEANS THE CHI-
CKEN'S TETHER
BINDS US
LESS



AND YOU, WITH YOUR COM-
PLETETE LACK OF IT DUE TO
BEING BIOLOGICALLY HUMAN,
ARE NOT BOUND BY IT AT
ALL.
YES, I REMEMBER,
ZUNG. WE'RE
BOTH GREMLINS



SARANNA'S HERE IN
DEFINITELY, BUT I ONLY
HAVE TWO WEEKS LEFT
ON MY SENTENCE BE-
FORE I'M BRAINWASHED
OR EXECUTED!
ILLNESS PERMITS EX-
TENDING SENTENCES BY
UP TO A WEEK



THE CHICKEN BELIEVES THAT
ALLOWING PRISONERS TO
SUFFER FROM ILLNESS WILL
MOTIVATE THEM TO JOIN
HIM. HIS POWER CAN CURE
ANY ILLNESS.

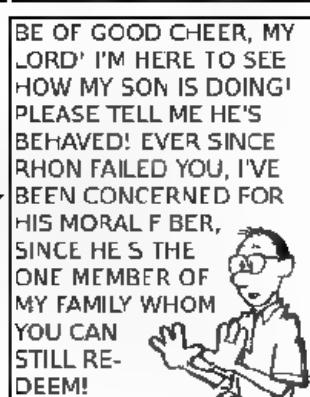
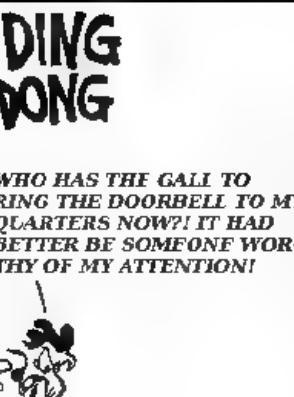
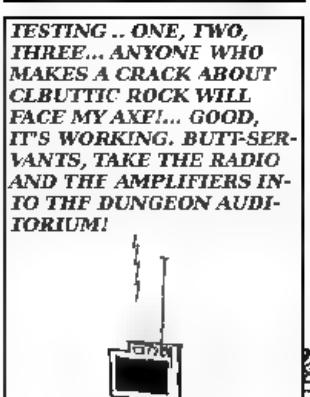
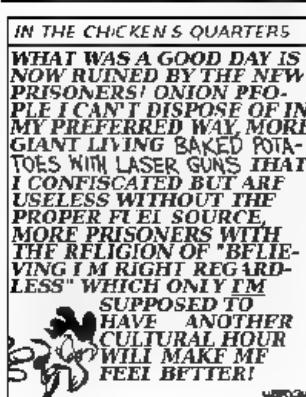
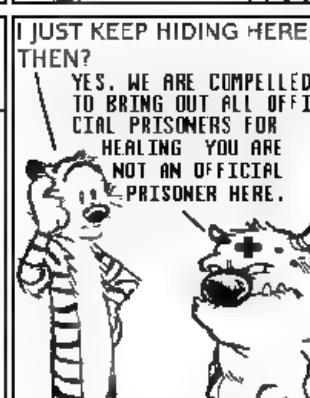
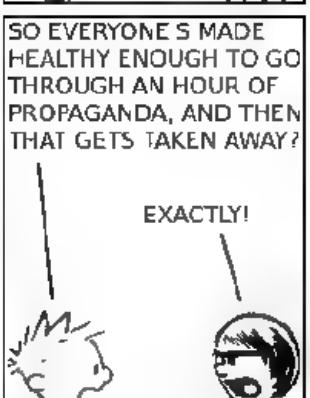
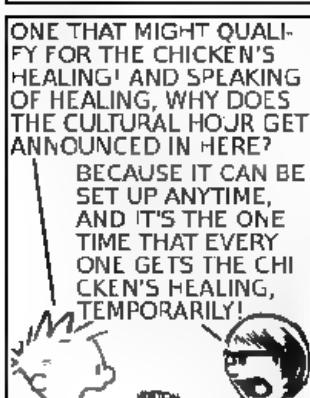
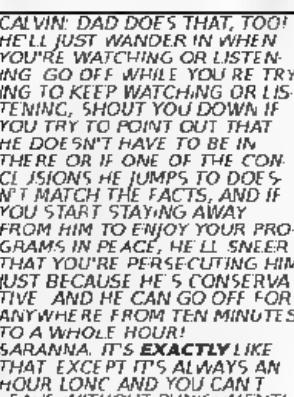
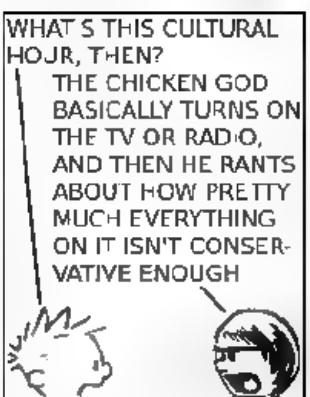
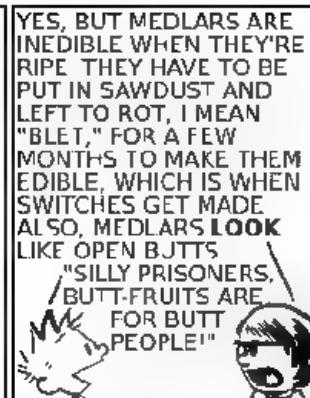
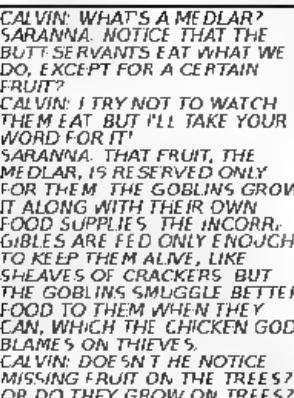
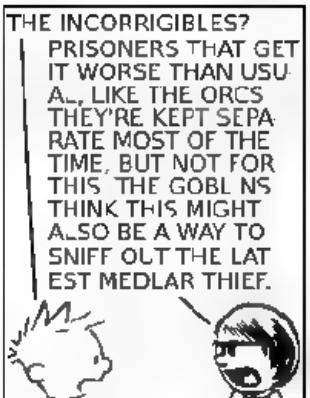
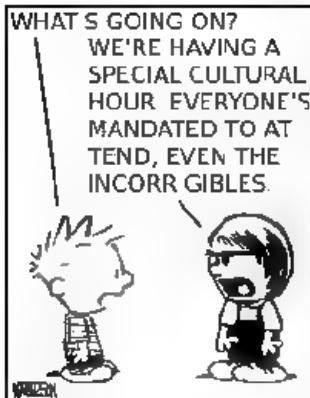
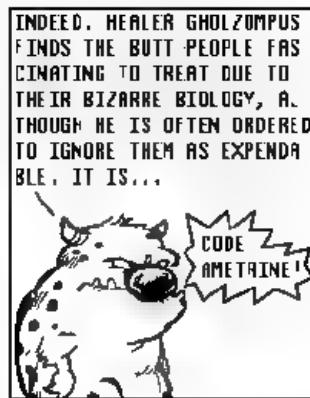
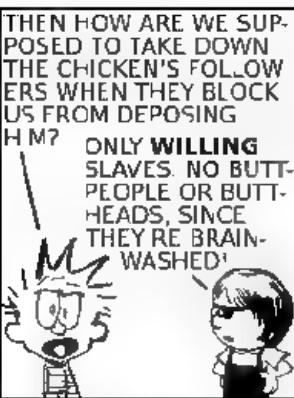
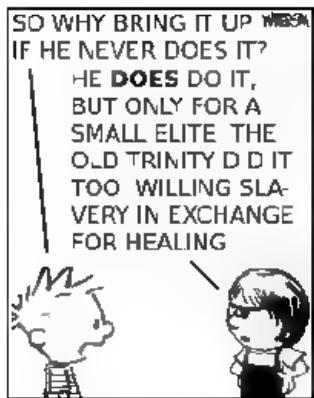


WHY DO YOU EVEN HAVE
AN INFIRMARY THEN?
WHY IS THERE A HEALTH
CARE SYSTEM OUT IN
THE WORLD THAT'S
REALLY A WAY TO TOR-
TURE AND MURDER PEO-
PLE? IF HE COULD CURE
ANYTHING ALL
ALONG



HE COULD WHETHER HE
DOES IS UP TO HIM THE
DEBRIEFING TAUGHT ME
A LOT! NOW YOU KNOW
WHY FREAKED
OUT AFTER I
LEARNED AB-
OUT THE SEC-
RET MASS KILL-
INGS!





IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOU, MY GLORIOUS SERVANT! BUT YOU SHOULD CALL YOUR FORMER WIFE RHONDA. R-H-O-N SOUNDS LIKE R-O-N, WHICH WILL MAKE OTHERS THINK YOU WERE A MALE-MALE PAIR INSTEAD OF A PROPER CONSERVATIVE MALE-FEMALE PAIR, THE ONLY TRUE PAIR!



FORGIVE ME, MY LORD, FOR JSING HER PREFERRED NICKNAME INSTEAD OF YOUR PREFERRED FULL NAME FOR HER! IS SHE DOING WELL AS A PROPER MEMBER OF YOUR BUTT-ARMY?



SHE DIED ON HER FIRST MISSION HER TELEKINESIS WAS TOO WEAK TO DEFLECT ATTACKS. TOO WEAK TO SERVE ME IN HUMAN FORM, TOO WEAK TO SERVE ME IN BUTT-FORM. THINGS END UP THAT WAY FAR TOO OFTEN.

THOUGHT SHE WAS STRONGER WHEN I MARRIED HER. IT'S A SHAME AT LEAST SHE DIED HONORABLY SERVING YOU, EVEN THOUGH SHE FAILED YOU TWICE. ONCE WITH HER OWN WILL, AND ONCE WITH HER WILL OVERRIDDEN WITH YOURS I WILL NOT FAIL!



YOU MAY DROP THE PRAYERFUL GESTURE, FOR I SENSE YOUR FULL DEVOTION THE BUTT-VICEROY DIRECTED RHONDA AS WELL, BUT HE COULD ONLY HELP SO MUCH. BUT TO GET BACK TO YOUR SON HE HAS YET TO MAKE THE DECISION TO SERVE ME OR BE DESTROYED, AND HE'S BEEN TALKING TO ONE OF THE LONG-TERM SPECIAL PRISONERS FOR THE LAST TWO DAYS!



THANK YOJ, MY LORD IT SOJNDS AS THOUGH CALVIN MAY BE WAFFLING, BUT THERE'S ST LL TIME FOR HIM TO TAKE THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW PATH. IF ONLY RHONDA AND I HAD STUCK TO OUR ORIG NAL PLAN AND HAD A SECOND CH LD!



HE WOULD HAVE LIKELY BEEN AN EVEN BETTER SERVANT. YES. BUT YOU CAN SEE YOUR SON SOON, BECAUSE THERE'S JUST ABOUT TO BE A CULTURAL HOUR THAT HE'S OBLIGATED TO ATTEND!

GLORY TO THE CONSERVATIVE CULTURE OF CHICKEN DOM!

'LL JOIN YOU IN THE AUDITORIUM FOR CULTURAL HOUR MOMENTARILY. I NEED TO CHECK IN WITH MY OLD FRIEND THE BUTT-VICEROY FIRST, THOUGH!

ENJOY! I'LL SEE YOU SOON!



IN THE BUTT-VICEROY'S QUARTERS, BEHIND CLOSED DOORS LIKE ST CYPRIAN OF ANTIOSH, I RETURN TO YOU WITH GOOD TIDINGS. IF ONLY MY ST JUSTINA HAD COOPERATED



YOUR MIND GOOD SHIELD STILL I GET HOLDS. BIG Y STRON SUSPECTS GERY DAYI NOTHING OF ME



YOUR HAVING RE GAINED THE ABILITY TO SPEAK IN NON FARTS PROVES STRENGTH, MY TRUE LORD!



IF ANYONE LAUGHS AT YOUR NEW VOICE ONCE YOU REVEAL YOURSELF, I'LL HELP YOU TORTURE THEM! ("THANKS STILL SO WEAK!")*



"I'VE TRACKED DOWN ALL THE POOP GHOSTS AND SOY GHOSTS THAT MY EX LOVE GAVE EXTRA POWER TO, AND ABSORBED THAT POWER ALONG WITH THEIR SPIRITUAL ENERGY WHEN THE BARRIER WEAKENED AROUND HALLOWEEN! THEY'RE HOLLOWED OUT!"

* TRANSLATED FROM FARTS

YES, I REMEMBER YOU EFFECTIVELY EXORCISED THE FOUR HEALERS, SATAN, OTHERS, AND ONE WHOM YOU FOUND FAMILIAR BUT COULDN'T IDENTIFY. BRAG OF IT AGAIN AND BE PROUD!



AND THEIR ACTUAL SPIRITS ARE IN THE REALM OF LOST SOULS, OUTS DE ONI JURISDICTION! NO ONE CAN TRULY DEFEAT THREE!



YES! SO YOU MUST CONTINUE THE PLAN! KEEP INGRA

TTATING YOURSELF TO HIM UNTIL HE GIVES YOU ULTIMATE POW

ER THEN...

YES! I'M ALMOST DONE PROCESSING THE EXTRA POWER! HE WILL SERVE ME THEN!



THE BIG Y IS SUCH A BIRDBRAIN, HE DOESN'T REALIZE ALL THE PEOPLE YOU BRAINWASHED SERVE YOU AND NOT HIM!

HA HA HA!



IF ONLY THE BUTT ARMED ME MINE, TOO! BUT WITH ENOUGH BRUTE FORCE, IT WILL BE! WE ONLY HAVE TO PRETEND FOR A LITTLE LONGER! MY CONTROL ONLY SLIPS WHEN HE CAUSES ME ENOUGH PAIN, BUT IF I TELL HIM WHAT HE WANTS TO HEAR, HE'LL HOLD BACK FROM THAT!

HOPEFULLY SO. BUT I CAN'T STAY. I HAVE TO CHECK ON MY SON, AND ENJOY ONE OF BIG Y'S CULTURAL HOURS!



I THERE'S NO RUSH LIKE THAT OF MAKING EVERYONE OTHER THAN YOURSELF YOUR MORAL INFERIOR! YES! EVEN RHONDA NEVER MADE ME FEEL SO GOOD!

AND YOU WERE THE ONE WHO GAVE HIM THE IDEA FOR IT! HOW DELICIOUSLY IRONIC! I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE HIS FACE WHEN CHRISTIANITY RULES AGAIN





IF ONLY THE ANGEL ONI WAR HAD GONE DIFFERENTLY I'D HAVE WON LONG AGO! WHO KNEW MY EX LOVE'S TURNING MY ANGELS INTO CYCLOCALIC FLAMINGO OCTOPUSES WOULD MAKE THEM ONI DELICACIES AND GET THEM EATEN EN MASSE? EXCEPT FOR A FEW DESERTERS? NOT I, TRUE LORD!

AND MY ATTEMPT YESTERDAY TO FIND DREMVALAAR AND DRAIN THEIR POWER JUST GOT THEIR NON-EXISTENT AND/OR POOP BOOTS SHOVED UP MY THREE FACES! SOMEHOW! SERIOUSLY, TRUE LORD, I HAVE TO GO, AND WE CAN'T TALK LIKE THIS WHEN I'M ABOUT TO OPEN THE DOOR! RIGHT! I WE BLESS YOU!

SLAM!
THERE'S ONE GOOD THING ABOUT THE DREMVALAAR BUSINESS! THERE'LL SOON BE A TRINACRIAN SECT OF DW'S CLAIMING THAT DREMVALAAR HAS THREE LEGS! MORE INFIGHTING MEANS MORE PAIN FOR THE ONI!



WE SOON FOUND SEATS, AND THEN WE WATCHED EVERYONE ELSE COME IN. WHO'S THAT? AND WHY ARE THEY SO FAR AWAY THAT WE HAVE TO STAND UP TO SEE THEM?

JABEZ STONE TUSK, THE KOTEK ORC CHIEF

SARANNA. AND HE'S SO FAR AWAY BECAUSE INCORRIGIBLES ARE DELIBERATELY KEPT AWAY FROM EVERYONE ELSE. EVEN HERE!

CALVIN: HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'S HIM?

SARANNA: HE'S SMILING AS A SHOW OF STRENGTH IN TRYING TIMES. ONLY ORC CHILDREN AND LEADERS HAVE THAT PRIVILEGE

AND IS THAT POSE HE'S IN A DISCO DANCING POSE?

YES. HE HAS TO KEEP UP HIS SKILL IN THAT BY PRACTICING IT A LOT!



("GIVE IT UP FOR THE ONE, THE ONLY, TRUE GOD! THE GENIAL ARCHITECT WHO'S ALWAYS RIGHT AND WHOSE WORKS ARE ALWAYS GOOD! HE WHO UP HOLDS GOOD AND PURE CONSERVATISM INSTEAD OF EVIL AND CORRUPT LIBERALISM! THERE IS NO STRENGTH OR POWER BUT IN THE CHICKEN ALONE, WHO IS ALMIGHTY!")*

* TRANSLATED FROM FARTS.

I LOVE YOU RANDOM BUTT-SERVANT!

("ZADOK!")

WHATEVER. LET'S TURN ON THE RADIO AND SEE WHETHER THE CULTURE HAS IMPROVED SINCE LAST TIME!

* TRANSLATED FROM FARTS

AS YOU MIGHT GUESS, IT HADN'T. THE ANNOUNCEMENT REMINDED ME IF I EVER SAID "WHATEVER" (OR "I DON'T CARE", OR ANYTHING SIMILAR) DAD WOULD PUNISH ME FOR APATHY AND MORAL RELATIVISM, THE LAST OF WHICH WAS ONE OF HIS MANY CODE WORDS FOR "DISAGREEMENT WITH HIS AUTHORITY". OF COURSE, HE COULD SAY THOSE THINGS WHENEVER HE WANTED SCOT-FREE JUST LIKE THE CHICKEN



HE'S NOT "ENRAGED," HE'S "PASSIONATE" IF ANYONE ELSE IS THAT WAY, THEY'RE "ENRAGED" OR "HAVE AN ATTITUDE" RIGHT. SELF-AWARENESS IS ONLY FOR THOSE WHO SUFFER HARM INSTEAD OF INFlicting IT!

"PRISE NCOLINE NAINCIU SOL" (I ONLY LEARNED HOW TO SPELL IT LATER)

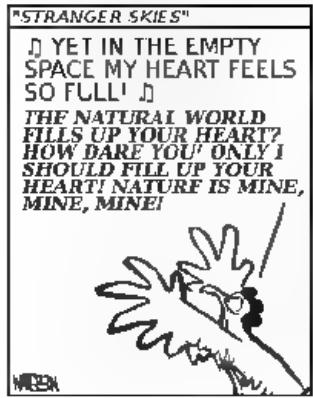
♪ *VAGUELY ENGLISH SOUNDING WORDS* PR SENCOLINE NAINCIU SOL. ALL RIGHT! ♪

WHAT IS THIS? WE'RE IN THE UNITED WORLD OF THE CHICKEN-LORD! ME! SPEAK THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF ENGLISH OR GET OUT!

"YOU'RE A GIRL"

♪ YOU'RE A GIRL, OR MAYBE A WAGON FILLED JP WITH PANCAKES! ♪

A MAN FALLING IN LOVE WITH A WAGON FULL OF PANCAKES? THE WAGON'S NOT FEMALE! THEY'RE NOT THE SAME SPECIES, EITHER! IT'S PORNOGRAPHIC! IT'S AMORAI LIBERAL SMUT!



"I WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR LOVE (BUT I WON'T DO THAT)"

♪ WILL YOU COLORIZE MY LIFE? I'M SO SICK OF BLACK AND WHITE! ♪

REFERENCING A RAINBOW MARVIN? IT'D BETTER BE A HETERO AWESOME RAINBOW CUTTING DOWN LIBERALISM WITH A MACHETE. MARVIN! *BLAH BLAH RANT RANT*

MARVIN, *BLAH BLAH RANT RANT* MARVIN! *RANT RANT* MARVIN!

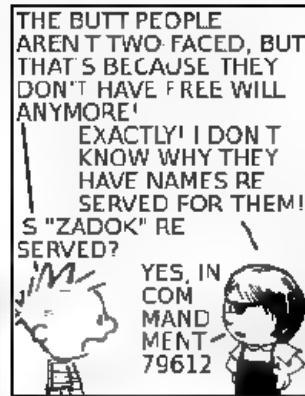
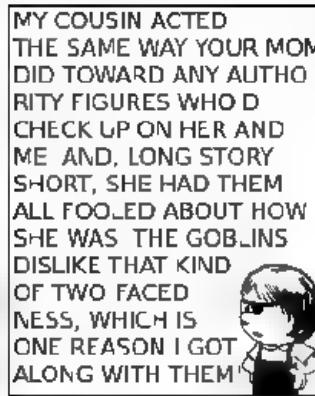
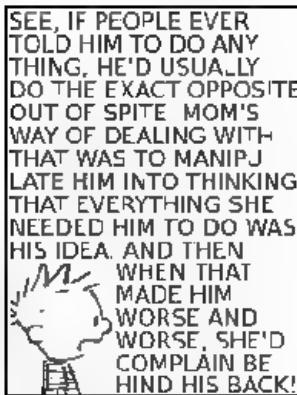
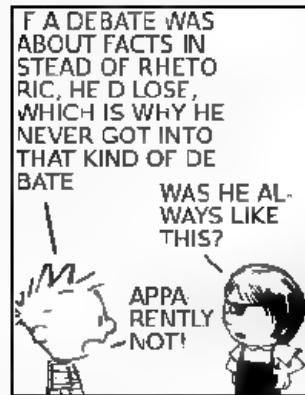
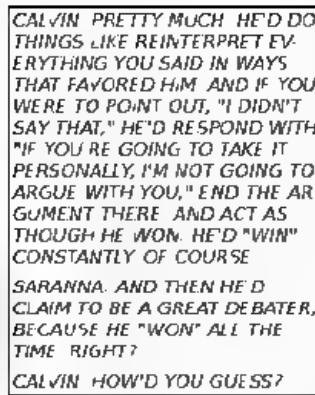
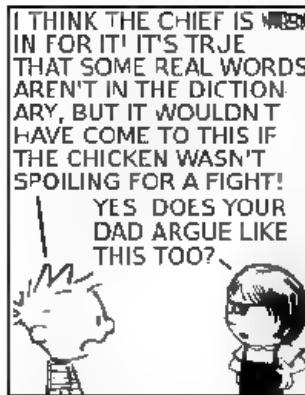
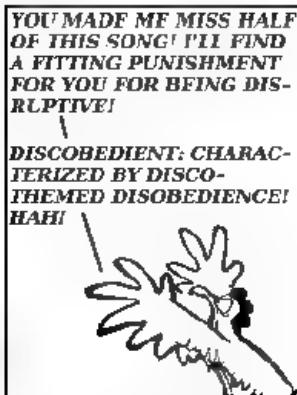
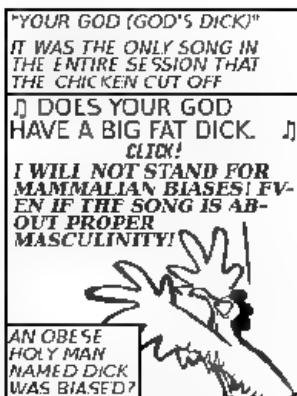
THAT SONG NEVER MENTIONED RAINBOWS! AND WHO'S MARVIN?

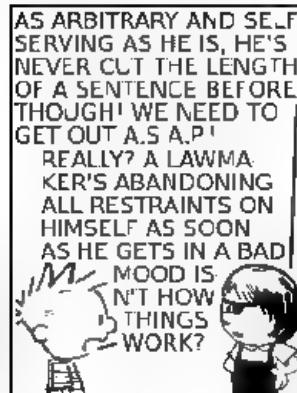
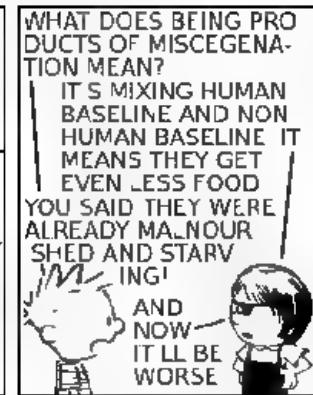
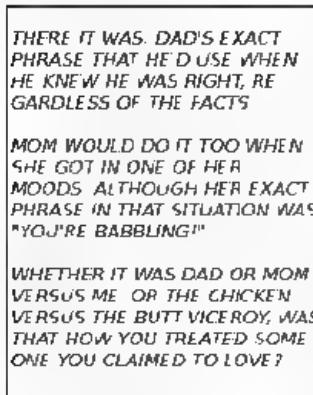
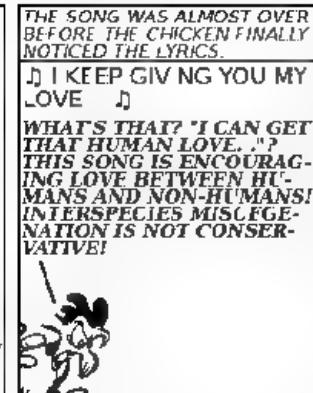
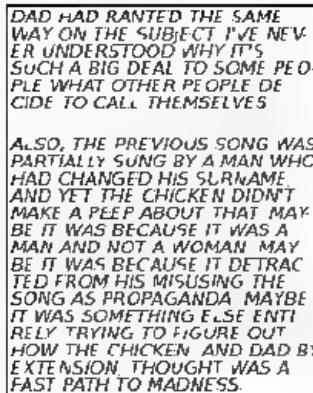
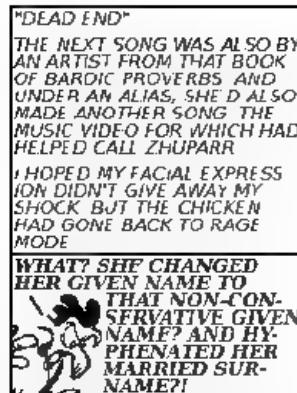
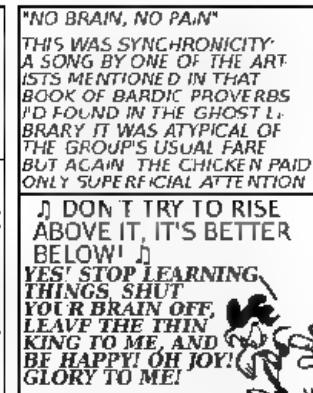
THE ARTIST'S ORIGINAL NAME THE ARTIST HATES IT, AND THE CHICKEN GOD HATES HIM, SO THE CHICKEN GOD DOES THIS EVERY TIME ONE OF HIS SONGS PLAYS

♪ THAT'S CRAZY! ♪

WHEN DAD STARTS ACTING AS THOUGH THE ARTISTS ARE IN THE SAME ROOM WITH HIM LIKE THIS, IT MEANS HE'S TICKED OFF ENOUGH TO START LOOKING FOR TARGETS TO TAKE HIS RAGE OUT ON!

IT'S THE SAME WITH THE CHICKEN GOD!







I DIDN'T KNOW THE SOON TO BE EXECUTED ORC CHIEF, AND SARANNA ONLY KNEW OF HIM DUE TO THE ORIGINAL TIES BETWEEN GOBLINS AND ORCS, BUT THIS WAS EVEN MORE UNFAIR THAN USUAL.

YEARS LATER, WHEN ALL THIS WAS OVER AND THE CHICKEN GOD WAS LONG DETHRONED THERE WAS A PETITION FOR A "DISOBEDIENCE DAY" TO REMEMBER THROJCH DANCE ALL THE INCORRIGIBLES WHO DIED DUE TO THE CHICKEN'S VENGEFUL PETTINESS. WHICH I GLADLY SIGNED.

EVEN DAD WAS NEVER THIS BAD! I BRIEFLY WONDERED WHETHER THE CHICKEN HAD BEEN INSPIRED BY SOMEONE EVEN WORSE OR HAD COME UP WITH THIS BEHAVIOR ON HIS OWN, BUT DID IT REALLY MATTER?

DAD HAD NO PROBLEM ENABLING IT, THOUGH.

THEY'RE GETTING WHAT THEY DESERVE! I ONLY HOPE MY SON DOESN'T SYMPATHIZE WITH SUCH LOWER CLASS TYPES! I RAISED HIM TO DO BETTER THAN THAT!

I DON'T THINK HE SAW WHERE I WAS IN THE AUDIENCE YET, JUST IN CASE, I KEPT UP A NEUTRAL EXPRESSION

I THINK THE HOUR'S JUST ABOUT UP WHICH MEANS WE'LL HAVE TO PRETEND TO BE SICK AS SOON AS THE HEALING AURA WEARS OFF! BUT SINCE DAD'S HERE, HE'S GOING TO WANT TO CHECK UP ON ME!

RIGHT! CATCH UP WITH ME AS SOON AS YOU CAN.

THE INCORRIGIBLES WERE LED AWAY, THE CHIEF DEFIANTLY DISCO DANCING ON HIS WAY OUT.

APPARENTLY THE CHICKEN GAVE EVERYONE A FIVE-MINUTE GRACE PERIOD ON THE HEALING AURA. HOW HE COULD BE SO GENEROUS ONE MINUTE AND SO UNPREDICTABLE THE NEXT WAS A QUESTION I WAS NEVER ABLE TO ANSWER.

DAD FINALLY NOTICED ME, AND MADE HIS WAY TO ME AS SARANNA HEADED FOR THE INFIRMARY AGAIN.

HELLO, CALVIN! I TRUST YOU'RE LEARNING HOW TO BEHAVE PROPERLY? WE MUST ALL GROW UP SOMETIME!

OF COURSE I AM! I CAN SEE WHAT MISBEHAVING WILL GET ME!

WHY ARE YOU SO NEGATIVE? DON'T YOU SEE THE BENEFITS OF OBEYING THE RIGHT AUTHORITIES? THE ONLY REAL WAY TO ADVANCE IS TO DO THAT!

YES, SIR!

I TOLD HIM WHAT HE WANTED TO HEAR FROM PAST EXPERIENCE: HE'D EITHER BUY IT AND GET SO PLEASED WITH HIMSELF THAT HE'D IGNORE ME, OR HE'D LATCH ONTO SOME REASON (REAL OR NOT) TO TEAR INTO ME REGARDLESS! I WAS LUCKY ENOUGH THAT HE BOUGHT IT THIS TIME. DID HE EXPECT SOMEONE HE HAD THROWN IN A DUNGEON TO BE HONE ST WITH HIM AT ALL?

IT REMINDED ME OF ANOTHER LINE IN THAT BOOK OF BARDIC WISDOM: "I'D RATHER STAY A CHILD AND KEEP MY SELF RESPECT, IF BEING AN ADULT MEANS BEING LIKE YOU."

I DIDN'T HAVE DAD'S UNLIMITED CAPACITY FOR TWO-FACEDNESS, THOUGH: IT WAS A RELIEF TO GET BACK TO THE INFIRMARY.

YOU ESCAPED WITHOUT DRAWING THE CHICKEN'S NOTICE! HOW SCARY WAS IT FOR YOU?

NOT AS SCARY AS THE WORLD WE'LL HAVE IF HE WINS, ESPECIALLY WITH PEOPLE LIKE DAD AT HIS SIDE AND FREELY SERVING HIM! BUT SARANNA, HAVE YOU HAD TO DEAL WITH YOUR COUSIN SINCE YOU GOT HERE?

NOT MUCH. THE CHICKEN GOD MADE HER BREEDING STOCK, AND THE RECORDS SAY SHE DIED IN CHILDBIRTH AFTER A WHILE. SO MY ONLY LIVING FAMILY OTHER THAN MY SO-CALLED PARENTS ARE A HORDE OF BUTT COUSINS ONCE REMOVED!

AND SINCE YOUR COUSIN WAS TRANSFORMED, DO THEY EVEN REALLY COUNT AS YOUR FAMILY?

GOOD QUESTION! A BETTER ONE IS, CONSIDERING HOW THEY ALL TREAT ME, DO THEY COUNT AS MY FAMILY AT ALL JUST BECAUSE THEY'RE RELATED TO ME BY BLOOD? THE GOBLINS TREAT ME MORE LIKE FAMILY THAN THAT, AND THEY'RE NOT RELATED TO ME AT ALL!

AND HOW DO PEOPLE LIKE MY DAD AND YOUR COUSIN THINK THE WAY THEY DO? I'M GOING TO CLAIM CERTAINTY! I SAY I KNOW THINGS THAT I CAN'T POSSIBLY KNOW! AND WHERE DID GET SUCH CERTAINTY?

SARANNA-VISION: BACK TO THAT ALTERNATE FUTURE SERIOUSLY, GET A MOVE ON AND GET OUT OF HERE!

"I PULLED IT OUT OF MY THIN AIR!"

THIN AIR! DON'T SAY YOU PULLED SOMETHING OUT OF YOUR BUTT UNLESS YOU MEAN IT'S TRUE! THE MEANING CHANGED WHEN THE CHICKEN AMASSED A BIG ENOUGH BUTT ARMY!

REALY? SO THAT'S WHY DAD FLIPPED OUT THAT ONE TIME WHEN HE SAID, "THE TRUTH I PULLED OUT OF MY BUTT WILL SET YOU FREE," AND I DIDN'T THINK HE WAS SERIOUS!

SO WHEN YOUR UNCLE MAX CALLED THOSE PEOPLE BRAINWASHED BY THE BUTTHEAD VICEROY "BUTTHEADS," THEY WOULD TAKE THAT AS A COMPLIMENT?

MY UNCLE MAX'S MOTHER HAD A SAYING: "IF I PUT A LOADED GUN TO YOUR HEAD, PREDICT YOU'RE GOING TO DIE, AND PULL THE TRIGGER, IT DOESN'T MAKE ME A CLAIRVOYANT." AND SHE'D KNOW! SHE WAS A CLAIRVOYANT!

SPEAK NG OF TRUTH, MY SARANNA VISION JUST GAVE ME ANOTHER WARNING, SAYING WE NEED TO LEAVE SOONER RATHER THAN LATER! LET ME DOUBLE CHECK!



THE TWO MOST LIKELY POSSIBILITIES ARE SUDDENLY A LOT LESS FUZZY! CAN SOMEONE CALL SHAMAN GHEFZARAL? THIS IS IMPORTANT!



LUCKILY, THE SHAMAN WASN'T FAR AWAY AND A VISION THAT REQUIRED SARANNA TO DROP THE EYE PATCH WAS DEFINITELY IMPORTANT

I WILL ASSIST YOU WITH MEDITATION, WHICH SHOULD CLEAR THEM UP MORE. WHAT DO THE TWO HAVE IN COMMON, IF ANYTHING?



BOTH OF THEM LEAVE THE CHICKEN GOD DE THRONED!

GOOD! WHAT OF THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THEM? IN ONE OF THE TWO, HE'S REPLACED BY SOMEONE EVEN WORSE



FOCUS ON YOUR BREATHING, AND ON THE UNIQUE PULSE OF THIS REALITY. SHADOWS ARE NECESSARY, FOR THEY KEEP REALITY FROM BECOMING A HELL OF BLINDING LIGHT. BUT TOO MANY SHADOWS MAKE REALITY A HAVEN OF SOO THING DARKNESS AND CONCEAL TOO MUCH SEEK TRUE BALANCE.



THE SHAMAN WENT ON THAT WAY FOR A BIT LONGER AND SARANNA WHO HAD APPARENTLY DONE THIS MEDITATION BEFORE BREATHED AND CHANTED IN WHAT I FOUND OUT LATER WAS THE GOBLINS ORIGINAL LANGUAGE SOON SHE FOUND WHAT SHE WAS LOOKING FOR

THE DIFFERENCE LIES IN WHETHER WE GET FOLLOWED!



MY VISION SAYS WE NEED TO GO INTO SPACE IF WE HAVE FULL STEALTH, AN ENEMY TAKES DOWN THE CHICKEN AND ONE OF HIS UNDERLINGS TAKES OVER!



BUT IF WE DON'T HAVE FULL STEALTH, THAT ENEMY FOLLOWS US, THE CHICKEN WARS WITH ONE OF HIS UNDERLINGS, AND THEIR FIGHT ENDS WITH NEITHER ONE SURVIVING!



OR IS IT BOTH SURVIVING? THAT PARTICULAR SHADOW REFUSES TO MOVE! AND ELDITCH POWER TAKES DOWN WHOEVER'S IN CHARGE, BUT WHETHER THE WORLD REMAINS LIVABLE DEPENDS ON AN UNLIKELY PARTNERSHIP AT THE RIGHT TIME!



IT'S EXHAUSTING. I NEED TO PUT THE EYEPATCH BACK ON AND TAKE A BREAK!

YOU'VE DONE WELL. I CAN SENSE THE TRUTH OF THIS REST.



PARDON ME, SHAMAN GHEFZARA, BUT IF YOU CAN SENSE TRUTH, HOW DID THE CHICKEN ENSLAVE YOUR KIND?

CONSENT CAN BE WEAPONIZED, WITH MANY LOOP-HOLES.



I LOOKED INTO WHAT HE MEANT AFTER THE CHICKEN WAS TAKEN CARE OF A FEW ORC PHILOSOPHERS WERE MORE THAN WILLING TO FILL ME IN TOO

"NO MEANS NO, YES MEANS YES, AND I CAN REVOKE THAT ANYTIME" TURNED INTO "I DON'T HAVE TO SAY YES AND MEAN YES IF I DON'T WANT TO." "I CAN SAY YES AND INSTANTLY CHANGE MY MIND WITHOUT NOTICE," AND "I SAID YES, BUT I CHANGED MY MIND RETROACTIVELY BY SAYING I FELT THREATENED."

THERE WERE EVEN MORE LOOPHOLES THAN THOSE, BUT EX SHAMAN GHIMZUROS HAD TURNED FINDING WAYS TO FEEL THREATENED INTO AN ART FORM IN HIS LONG GAME OF SELLING HIS OWN PEOPLE TO THE CHICKEN

A GAME WHICH ENDED WITH HIM SCREAMING AT THE CHICKEN "YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME! WE HAD A DEAL" AND A FATE NO ONE WANTED TO DESCRIBE TO ME. FOR BOTH HIM AND HIS FOLLOWERS

NOW I DON'T HAVE TO BUILD A DUNGEON MYSELF!

GIVEN ERIS LAST MESSAGE TO CALVIN AND THE OTHER MAIN PART OF MY VISION, CALVIN NEEDS TO MAKE HIS OWN DEAL WITH THE SNOW DEMONS FOR EVERYTHING TO WORK OUT

WIZARD SUNFLARE'S INFORMED CONSENT, OR THE GOBLINS' EQUIVALENT OF IT WAS A MUCH BETTER WAY BUT THEY COULD ONLY MAKE FULL USE OF IT ONCE THEY WERE NO LONGER SLAVES AND IT WAS MY JOB TO MAKE SURE THAT CAME TO BE

IT'S A GOOD THING I KNOW HOW TO FIGHT, SINCE WE'RE GOING TO BE FOLLOWED BUT TO WHERE EXACTLY?

NO OFFENSE, SUPER HOBBS, BUT YOU CAN'T BE IN MULTIPLE PLACES AT ONCE, AND WE NEED MULTIPLE FIGHTERS TO WIN THIS WAR!

NO PROBLEM! WE STILL GET TO HELP SAVE THE WORLD!

THE VERY END OF THE DEBRIEFING WAS INTERRUPTED. SHAMAN, IF YOU ARE DONE, I MUST CONTINUE WITH IT.

I AM. DO YOUR DUTY WELL, ZUNG.



YOUR GUIDE IS PROPERLY SECURED, AND HAS BEEN FOR SEVERAL YEARS PRISONER X 747. I WILL ESCORT YOU TO HIS CELL UNDER COVER OF NIGHT, BUT NIGHTFALL WON'T BE FOR SOME HOURS.



I'LL PASS ON WORD TO THE GREMLIN ENGINEERS TO MAKE THE LAST ZARNIUM COATED PART FOR THE SHIP, BUT TO NOT SWAP IT OUT UNTIL THE TRIP OFFWORLD IS DONE.



HE LEFT US IN THE DEBRIEFING ROOM AND WAS BACK WITHIN MINUTES

PRISONER X 747 HAS BEEN INFORMED OF THIS, AND HE WISHES TO MEET THOSE HE WILL BE GUIDING. THAT WILL ALSO HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL NIGHTFALL.



WE WAITED FOR NIGHTFALL. IT HAD BEEN A WEIRD DAY AND WE WEREN'T ALL THAT HUNGRY DUE TO THE MEALS SARANNA AND I HAD EATEN AT MCZARGALD'S. BUT THE INFIRMARY INSISTED ON OUR EATING ON SCHEDULE, AND DELIVERED OUR MEALS ANYWAY.

SO MINESTRONE SOUP FOR US BOTH? WAIT, I FEEL THAT PRESENCE AGAIN!



THE FLYING SPAGHETTI MONSTER TURNED MY MINESTRONE SOUP INTO RAVIOLI! AFTER SOME TALK WITH HEALER GHOL ZOMPUS, BOTH IT AND SARANNA'S MINESTRONE SOUP WERE DONATED TO OTHER PATIENTS WHO ACTUALLY WERE SICK AND COULD STOMACH THEM.

SARANNA'S BEING ABLE TO SENSE THE UPCOMING CHANGE ON HER OWN CAME IN HANDY LATER IN THE MEANTIME, ALL WE COULD DO WAS KEEP WAITING.

BOTH ZHUPARR AND HOBES HADN'T EATEN IN A WHILE BEFORE I'D SUMMONED THEM SO SUPER HOBES GLEEFULLY ATE HIS SOUP.



THEN NIGHTFALL ARRIVED IT'S TIME. FOLLOW ME. THE PASSAGEWAY WE NEED IS THIS WAY.



ZUNG LED US THROUGH A SERIES OF HIDDEN DOORWAYS, PROCEEDING DEEPER AND DEEPER, FINALLY HE STOPPED AT A CLEARLY MARKED DOOR.

THE BORDER OF THE DUNGEON IS ABOVE US. THE GREMLIN ENGINEERS BEYOND IT ARE PUTTING THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON THE SHIP.



ZUNG, YOU'RE EARLY! WE GOT THE ORDERS TO NOT MAKE THE SHIP FULL STEALTH, AND X-747 HAS VERIFIED THAT IT SHOULD FLY PROPERLY! WHY THE RUSH WHEN WE'VE WAITED SO LONG ALREADY?



ZORL, WE HAVE NEW REASON TO BELIEVE THAT TIMING IS CRITICAL, AND I AND MY CHARGES GOT HERE A LITTLE EARLY FOR THAT REASON. BY THE HUMAN DEFINITION OF NIGHTFALL, WE'RE RIGHT ON TIME.



THE HUMAN DEFINITION OF NIGHTFALL?

DUNGEON GOBLINS CAN SEE BETTER IN DARKNESS, SO THEY DON'T CONSIDER IT NIGHTFALL UNTIL IT'S DARK BY THEIR STANDARD!



BY TIGER AND DEMON STANDARDS, IT'S NOT REALLY NIGHTFALL YET EITHER.



THE SHIP HAS PASSED INSPECTIONS, PEER REVIEWS, AND DEFECT TRACKING.



DIDN'T KNOW SO MANY GOBLINS COULD FIT IN ONE PLACE!



AND WE'RE ALL UNDERGROUND BUT OUTSIDE OF IT IN IS THIS A BIG HANGAR?



AND WE MAY NOT ANSWER TO THE PRISONER, BUT I DISLIKE THE NECESSITY OF HAVING TO KEEP A PRISONER. IF CIRCUMSTANCES WERE NOT WHAT THEY WERE...



I CAN SEE WHY, ZULK. I DIDN'T KNOW YOU MADE THE ENGINEERING CORPS UNTIL NOW! CONGRATULATIONS!



THERE IS THE SHIP. WE HAVE A ZARNIUM COATED SPATIAL FROBONICATOR FOR WHEN FULL STEALTH IS NEEDED. BUT IT'S NOT INSTALLED, PER OUR INSTRUCTIONS.



AND X-747 IS COMING. AFTER THIS, I FINALLY GET TO GO HOME, YES?



WHO ARE YOU, EXACTLY?

AM KRAL TAR. I'VE BEEN HERE LONG ENOUGH FOR THESE GOBLINS TO LEARN MY SHIP AND REPAIR IT FOR A MISSION HUH!



A MISSION THAT THEY HAVE BEEN VAGUE ABOUT ASIDE FROM SAYING FRIENDS OF A FRIEND WOULD BE INVOLVED!



CALVIN, AS IN MAX'S NEPHEW? I AT LEAST KNOW THAT NAME! WHO ARE YOU OTHERS?

I'M SARANNA, AND THAT'S SUPER-HOBES THE DEMON TIGER. WE'RE CALVIN'S FRIENDS



I WAS STILL PROCESSING IT ALL SO THIS WAS KRAL TAR THE ONE WHOSE POWER OF SUPER BLASPHEMY HAD MADE THE CHICKEN KILL SARANNA'S SISTER INSTEAD OF HER ("IF YOU GIVE A GOD A MIGRAINE, HE MIGHT INFECT THE WRONG TWIN WITH ARJENFLORB SYNDROME") AND WHO'D SAVED MY UNCLE FROM BEING MADE A POOP GHOST ("GREATER LOVE HATH NO ONE THAN THIS THAT A MAN MERCY KILL EAT, AND POOP OUT HIS FRIEND BEFORE AN EVIL GOD CAN DO THOSE THINGS FIRST AND SILENCE HIS FRIEND'S GHOST"). IT WAS A LOT

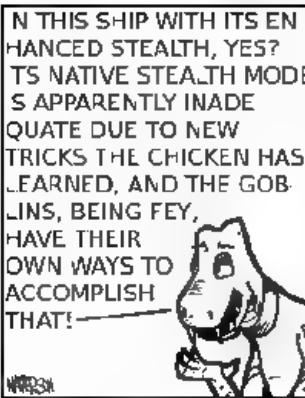


I'VE BEEN KEPT HERE BECAUSE AN FTL SPACE CRAFT CAPABLE OF ESCAPING THE SOLAR SYSTEM IS ONE WAY TO ESCAPE HIS AND HIS ARCHONS, AND IT NEEDED TO BE REPAIRED AND KEPT SECRET WHILE THESE GOBLINS, OR GREMLINS, OR WHATEVER THEY CALL THEMSELVES

ARE GOOD AT LEARNING TECHNOLOGY FOREIGN TO THEM, EVEN MORE SO WITH MY HELP, I'D LIKE BEING HELD CAPTIVE! IT MAY BE NECESSARY, BUT I WOULD PREFER TO GET BACK TO SKIRRA AND MY OWN LIFE AT SOME POINT!

CALVIN AND I ARE BOTH CAPTIVES HERE, TOO!

ACCORDING TO MAX, YOU'VE BEEN HERE FOR A FEW YEARS! SO HAVE I, SINCE I HAVE A POWER THE CHICKEN WANTS AND HE CAN'T TAKE IT BY FORCE! AND CALVIN'S BEEN HERE FOR TWO WEEKS, AND HE'LL BE EITHER EXECUTED OR BRAINWASHED IN ANOTHER TWO UNLESS WE GET OUT OF HERE!



IT'S STILL GOOD TO MEET YOU! WE AT LEAST GOT TO BE RELATIVELY IN THE OPEN! AND THE ONLY REASON I'M HERE IS BECAUSE THE CHICKEN GOT A MIGRAINE AND ACCIDENTALLY GAVE MY TWINSISTER THE DEADLY DISEASE HE WANTED TO GIVE ME, THANKS TO YOUR BLASPHEMY!

MY CONDOLENCES MY NDJED MI GRAINE SHOULD HAVE BEEN STRONG ENOUGH TO KNOCK HIM OUT, BUT DON'T WORRY! YOU DIDN'T KILL HER, THE CHICKEN DID!

AND IF IT WEREN'T FOR SOME GOOD TIMING ON THE PART OF THE SNOW DEMONS, I'M SURE HE'D HAVE KILLED US BOTH EVENTUALLY DUE TO HIS BLOODTHIRST! THAT'S WHY WE'RE FINALLY TAKING HIM DOWN!

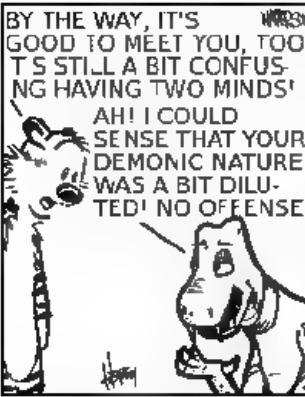


BETTER TO HAVE SOMEONE YOU KNOW BEST FIGHTING FOR YOU! MOST OF THE GOBLINS DO NOT KNOW ME OR WANT TO, AND HAVE INSTEAD PICKED MY BRAIN FOR TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE! I'M NOT HERE TO MAKE FRIENDS, BUT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN...

GOOD TO MAKE A FEW DURING THE YEARS HERE! I WAS MOVED A FEW TIMES TO TALK TO THE SHAMAN, WHO SEEMED DECENT ENOUGH, BUT IT'S NOT HIS JOB TO BE MY FRIEND! THEY ALL TOOK ME IN AS FAMILY, BUT THEY CAN BE HARD FOR OUTSIDERS TO UNDERSTAND...

OR VICE VERSA, IT SEEMS I AM TIRED OF THE ONES WHO CALLED EVERYTHING I SAID THAT DIDN'T ADVANCE REPAIRING OR ENHANCING MY SHIP "NON SENSE," JUST BECAUSE IT WAS OUTSIDE THEIR FOCUS!

YES, SOME OF THEM SHOULD KNOW BETTER THAN THAT!



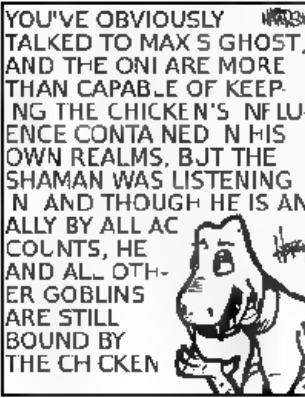
MY PEOPLE HAD TO FIGHT BOTH DEMONS AND OTHER CELESTIALS ENOUGH THAT WE DEVELOPED A WAY TO SENSE BOTH, EVEN WHEN THEY HID. AND THE CHICKEN WOULD NEVER WORK WITH A DEMON OF ANY KIND GIVEN HIS BLACK AND WHITE THINKING!

THE ENGINE IS FINALLY DONE INITIALIZING. IF YOU'RE DONE WITH INTRODUCTIONS, YOU SHOULD GO SOON. IT'S BEEN FASCINATING HAVING YOU HERE!

THANK YOU, ZULK. YOU'VE BEEN GOOD TO ME, AT LEAST!

I'LL LOOK YOU UP WHEN THIS WAR'S OVER! BUT I MUST DO ONE LAST THING: I NEED TO MAKE SURE CALVIN AND SARANNA AREN'T AGENTS OF THE CHICKEN EVEN INADVERTENTLY!

I LOOK FORWARD TO IT! AND THAT'S GOOD SENSE!



SO I NEED TO BE CERTAIN THAT YOU TWO ARE NOT BEING TRICKED BY THE CHICKEN, EVEN WITHOUT YOUR KNOWLEDGE, AND THUS LEADING ME INTO A TRAP! IT'S NOT PERSONAL, BUT I DIDN'T SURVIVE THIS LONG BY BEING OVERCONFIDENT. YOU UNDERSTAND, YES?

WAIT, THERE WAS THAT SONG HE SAID HE TOLD YOU ABOUT! HOW DID IT GO? HE HAD A GROUNDHOG, SAID HIS NAME WAS FRED. TOLD ME IF I DIDN'T GIVE HIM MY SOUL, THE GROUNDHOG SOON WOULD BE DEAD.

AND SO WE BEGAN OUR SOMEWHAT MANGLED VERSION OF "THE BALLAD OF SATAN'S GROUNDHOG."

THE CHICKEN'S RECENT MUSIC HOUR HAD SCRAMBLED MY MEMORY OF THE SONG A BIT. IT WASN'T ABOUT A WOODCHUCK NAMED TED, BUT I COULD REMEMBER OTHER PARTS OF IT.

RIGHT! AND THE END!

HE SAID, "YOU CAN'T COME IN UNLESS YOU'VE GOT A GROUNDHOG!" I SAID, "SON, THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN TRYING TO TELL YOU ALL ALONG!"

AND SUPER HOBBS HARMONIZED ON THE BITS ABOUT SATAN THAT WE COULD REMEMBER

SATAN SATAN...



SOON, KRAL TAR STOPPED JS GOOD! THAT'S DEFINITELY MAX'S SONG! AND YOUR ABILITY TO SPEAK, OR EVEN THINK, SATAN'S NAME PROVES THAT THE CHICKEN DOESN'T BIND YOU! HE'S AN UN PERSON NOW? SINCE WHEN?



SINCE SOMETIME AFTER I WAS BROUGHT HERE. I WAS TELLING ZJLK WHAT I KNEW OF THE WORLD BEYOND THIS DUNGEON, OR EVEN THIS REALITY, AND I FOUND THAT HE WAS SUDDENLY UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND MY ACCOUNT OF CHRISTIANITY BEFORE THE CHICKEN CAME!



GOING FROM ENEMY TO UNPERSON IS A BIG CHANGE! HE MUST HAVE GOTTEN SUPREMELY CONFIDENT! THE LAST UNPEOPLE I REMEMBER HEARING ABOUT WERE "RUFUS XAVIER SARSAPARILLA AND A FEW OTHERS, DURING THE CHICKEN'S MONTH OF NO PRONOUNS! BUT MAX MUST HAVE KNOWN ABOUT IT!"

AND NOW THAT YOU KNOW I'M NOT WORKING FOR THE CHICKEN, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT HE ACTUALLY HAS BEEN WORKING WITH DEMONS MOST OF THE REST OF MY KIND, BUT NOT BY THEIR CHOICE! AND SOME OF THEM WERE LISTENING, TOO!



I'M ONE OF THE FEW WHO ESCAPED HIM. IT'S ONE OF THE REASONS I'M HELPING CALVIN! THE OTHER IS THAT THE OTHER HALF OF ME IS CALVIN'S BEST FRIEND!



I STAND CORRECTED. YAL DABA AWK APPARENTLY NOW BELIEVES HE IS INVINCIBLE, OR CLOSE ENOUGH TO IT TO START BREAKING HIS MOST STRONGLY HELD PRINCIPLES WHEN HE THINKS DOING SO WILL GIVE HIM AN ADVANTAGE. IT IS A SIGN OF HIS DECLINE!



HE'S ALSO STARTED CUTTING HIS PRISONERS SENTENCES SHORT, WHICH IS WHY WE NEED TO ESCAPE HIM EVEN SOONER THAN WE THOUGHT BEFORE HE DOES IT TO CALVIN!



THE GOBLINS HERE DO TALK ABOUT WHAT GOES ON AROUND HERE. THE PREVAILING THEORY IS THAT THE ORC CHIEF'S EARLY DEATH WILL CAUSE LESS PAIN IN THE LONG RUN



I KNOW LITTLE ABOUT ORCS, BUT THEIR CHIEFS KEEP TRACK OF MATINGS AND MARRIAGES WITHIN THE CLAN. THERE ARE SEVERAL MALE ORCS WITH HUSBANDS AND FEMALE ORCS WITH WIVES, AND A FEW WHO'VE USED MAGIC TO CHANGE GENDERS IN .



..THE KOTEK CLAN MEMBERS HERE, AND THE CHIEF KEEPS ALL THE RECORDS IN HIS HEAD WITH HIS EXECUTION, THE CLAN ONLY HAS TO KEEP THOSE NON CONSERVATIVE MEMBERS SECRET FOR A BIT LONGER, AND THEN THEY ONLY GET EXECUTED WITH OUT FACING WORSE BE FOREHAND!



SO HE TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE CHICKEN'S BAD MOOD TO SACRIFICE HIMSELF TO MAKE SURE THEY GET THE EASIEST POSSIBLE DEATH! THAT FITS WITH WHAT I KNOW OF ORCS! JUST LIKE CHENDARR THE BARBARIAN! INDEED, I'M TOLD HE WAS INSPIRING!



IT'S FORTUNATE THAT ORCS ARE STILL FEY AND IMMUNE TO THE CHICKEN'S MIND-READING, AND THAT THIS PLACE IS OUTSIDE THE DUNGEON AND SO DOESN'T SET OFF THE G WORD ALARM BUT NOW THAT I KNOW I CAN TRUST YOU, WE MUST GO.

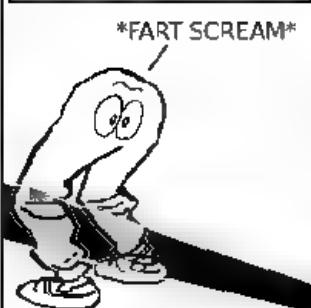


ALL FOUR OF US PACKED INTO THE SHIP WITH KRAL TAR IN THE PILOT'S SEAT. HE WAS UNHAPPY AT NOT HAVING FULL ENHANCED STEALTH, BUT THE POSSIBILITY OF THE CHICKEN'S BEING REPLACED WITH AN EVEN WORSE ENTITY CONVINCED HIM IT WAS NECESSARY.

THE HANGAR OPENED AT THE TOP REVEALING THE NIGHT SKY. WE WERE SO CLOSE TO REALLY GETTING OUT OF THE DUNGEON.

BUT JUST AS KRAL TAR HADN'T ANTICIPATED EVERYTHING IN TERMS OF SECURITY, NO ONE ANTICIPATED THAT ONE OF THE BUTT SERVANTS WAS RIGHT OUTSIDE THE HANGAR.

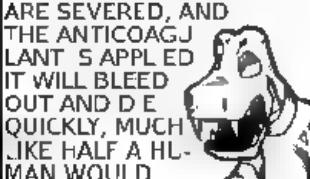
KRAL TAR WAS READY, THOUGH FIDDLING WITH A RED HEXAGONAL PANEL.



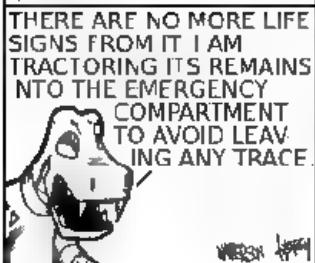
FART SCREAM

THE BEAM MOVED UPWARD, PULSED AND SHEARED THE BUTT SERVANT'S LEGS OFF AT THE THIGHS. BLOOD POURED OUT OF THE OPEN WOUNDS AS THEIR VOICE FADED AND THEY COLLAPSED. AFTER A FEW SECONDS, KRAL TAR DIMMED THE VIEWSCREEN SO WE DIDN'T HAVE TO WITNESS EVERYTHING.

THE FEMORAL ARTERIES ARE SEVERED, AND THE ANTICOAGULANT'S APPLIED. IT WILL BLEED OUT AND DIE QUICKLY, MUCH LIKE HALF A HUMAN WOULD.



KRAL TAR THEN SWITCHED TO FIDDLING WITH A PURPLE HEXAGONAL PANEL. WE STILL COULDN'T SEE ANYTHING, BUT THE BEAM FIRING SOUND CHANGED TO A LOWER FREQUENCY.



NOW SCANNING THE REMAINS STANDARD BONE STRUCTURE, SO NOT ONE OF THE ENHANCED BJJT SOLDIERS. AND, FOR THE RECORD, ON THE BACK OF THE REVERSE PELVIS SKULL, A BAJBELLUM, NOT A BACULUM OR ANYTHING IN BETWEEN, SO NOT AN IT, A SHE, AT LEAST BIOLOGICALLY

THINK I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO UNDERSTOOD ALL THAT, SINCE KILLING IS SO GROUNDED IN THE LIBERAL ARTS FOR BOTH TIGERS AND DEMONS!

WE ONLY HAD TO FIGHT A FEW, BUT THEY WERE ENOUGH.



I ALSO FIND IT MUCH EASIER TO REMEMBER SOME PROCEDURES IF SAY THEM OUT LOUD WHILE DOING THEM. AND WE CANNOT AFFORD TO FAIL THIS MISSION. IN SHORT, THE THREAT IS GONE.

GOOD! BUT WHAT DO WE DO WITH HER RE MAN'S NOW?!



WOULD USUALLY REMOVE A FRAGMENT FOR WHATEVER DEATH CUSTOMS ITS OWNER WOULD REQUIRE, AND PUT THE REST INTO THE SH P BIOCONVERTER TO MAKE MORE EKAFEL BUT FROM WHAT I HEAR, YOU ARE MAKING USE OF ELD- RITCH POWER.

I'VE HAD TRAINING TO DEAL WITH IT, JUST AS SUPER HOBSES, OR HIS ZHUPARR HALF, APPARENTLY HAS YOU AND CALVIN NEED TIME TO PROCESS IT, ALONG WITH ALL THE OTHER THINGS YOU'VE EXPERIENCED, EVEN IF CALVIN SEEMS TO HANDLE IT FOR NOW.

THAT NARROWS IT DOWN NICELY TO ONE WORLD IN PARTICULAR. ZARTOK 3 THE COORDINATES FOR IT ARE IN THE SH P MEMORY BANKS ALREADY, AND WE SHOULD GET GOING THAT WAY BEFORE ANY OTHER AGENTS OF THE CHICKEN SHOW UP HERE.

BWEGZORRRM!

KRALTAR WORKED THE CONTROLS SOME MORE AND THEN ENGAGED THE FTL DRIVE. THE SHIP FINALLY STARTED ITS LONG JOURNEY OUT OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM.

NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE!

SUCH THREADS FOLLOW ALL THOSE INVOLVED IN PROPHECIES, BUT THE AMOUNT OF POWER REQUIRED TO FULLY PERCEIVE THEM IS STAGGERING, SO I BELIEVE IT TO BE AN ACCEPTABLE RISK.

IF YOU SAY SO GOOD NIGHT!

AND SUCH REMAINS CAN BE USEFUL FOR SUCH, YES? ALTHOUGH I'M NOT THAT FAMILIAR WITH THEM

I AM ZHU- PARR ISI AND FOES RE MAINS DEFINITE- LY ARE!

SO DO WE ALL!

GIVE ME A MOMENT TO GET US FAR ENOUGH AWAY FROM THE HANGAR. AS FOR WHERE WE GO AFTER THAT, ALL I HAVE HEARD FROM BOTH THE GOBLINS AND YOU SUGGEST THAT WE NEED TO FIND A PLACE OF SPIRITUAL AND MAGICAL LEARNING TO SUCCEED

IT WILL TAKE NEARLY SIX DAYS TO LEAVE THE SOLAR SYSTEM AT LIGHT SPEED, PLUS SLIGHTLY OVER ONE DAY TO REACH ZARTOK 3, SO ROUGHLY A WEEK IN TOTAL. THE FTL DRIVE, AT FULL CAPACITY, CAN CUT THAT DOWN TO ROUGHLY FIFTEEN HOURS.

NEITHER HAVE I

WOW! HYPERSPACE WAS INDESCRIBABLY BEAUTIFUL SOMEHOW

AND BY NOT CARING, I MEANT EITHER THE STANDARD VERSION OR THE VERSION DAD, AND TO A LESSER EXTENT MOM USED (NAMELY, ON THE BRIEFLIST MENTION OF SOME THING RANTING ABOUT IT FOR ABOUT FIVE MINUTES AND THEN ASSERTING THEY DIDN'T CARE ABOUT IT) BECAUSE EITHER WAY WOULD SLOW HIM DOWN AND THE LATTER VERSION LIKELY CAME STRAIGHT FROM HIM ANYWAY

I'LL KEEP THEM WHERE THEY ARE FOR NOW THEN ELDITCH POWER CAPABLE OF TAKING DOWN YALDABAAWK OBVIOUSLY TAKES PRIORITY

THANKS, I STILL HAVE A LOT TO LEARN, THOUGH!

SO DO WE ALL!

ONE OUTSIDE THIS SOLAR SYSTEM, TO PUT IT OUT OF THE REACH OF YALDABAAWK OR ANY OF HIS ARCHONS, BUT WITHIN THIS REALITY, SINCE OTHER REALITIES' WAYS MAY NOT MATCH THIS ONE CLOSELY AND SO WILL NOT HELP YOU IN THIS PARTICULAR QUEST

SUDDENLY I WAS FREAKED OUT RUNNING AT MAXIMUM CAPACITY? DOES THAT HAVE A HIGH RISK OF BREAKING DOWN? WHAT WILL WE DO FOR A WEEK IF THAT HAPPENS? AND WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE FOLLOWED ANYWAY!

YAWN!

ALTHOUGH THE FACT THAT IT WAS EVENING CAUGHT UP WITH EVERYONE, BUT KRALTAR SOON ENOUGH BOTH MY ZHUPARR AND HOBSES HALVES ARE EXHAUSTED

WE ALL WOKE UP ABOUT TWELVE HOURS LATER. SARANNA TOLD US WHAT KRALTAR HAD SAID ABOUT THE THREADS OF PROPHECY AND I WONDERED OUT LOUD HOW FAR THE CHICKEN WOULD GO. WE'D ALL FIND OUT SOON ENOUGH.

GOOD TO KNOW. BUT I'M GOING BACK TO SLEEP! I'LL REALLY NEED MY STRENGTH TO PRACTICE ALL MY ELDITCH POWERS SOON

HOW CAN YOU THREE BE SO CALM WHEN WE JUST AVOIDED GETTING CAUGHT BY SUCH A TINY MARGIN? MY VISION IS STILL UNCLEAR ON EXACTLY WHO FOLLOWS US AND SOLIDIFIES THE RIGHT FUTURE!

SARANNA COMPOSED HERSELF AND SPOKE UP AGAIN CALVIN'S PLAN IS TO MAKE A DEAL WITH THE SNOW DEMONS, MUCH LIKE HOW I DID! BUT HE'S AIMING FOR OFFENSIVE POWER TO TAKE DOWN THE CHICKEN GOD, INSTEAD OF VISION LIKE MINE!

THE FTL DRIVE HAS BEEN STRESS-TESTED AND QUADRUPLE CHECKED, AND EVEN WITH THE GOBLINS' MODIFICATIONS, THAT SHOULD NOT HAPPEN. IT'S THE ONE THING I CAN BE REASONABLY SURE OF

YAWN!

SARANNA WAS THE LAST TO FALL ASLEEP.

I CAN'T STAY AWAKE MUCH LONGER, BUT HOW CAN THE CHICKEN GOD TRACK US? THE EFFECTS OF THIS KIND OF FTL DRIVE, PLUS THE THREADS OF PROPHECY

THE REST OF THE TRIP WAS UNEVENTFUL. TOWARD THE VERY END OF IT, SARANNA TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK ONE QUESTION

KRALTAR? MAX TOLD US ABOUT SOME OF THE CONVERSATIONS YOU HAD SO. WOULD YOU KNOW WHAT THE "H" IN "JESUS H CHRIST" REALLY STANDS FOR?

YES, ACTUALLY! IT'S COMPLEX. IT WAS.

AND THEN YAHWEH YELLED AT JESUS FOR BECOMING INVOLVED WITH A NEWLY ASCENDED GOD WHO COULD TAKE THE FORM OF AN ATTACK HELICOPTER, AS WELL AS FOR MAKING THAT GOD'S FULL NAME PART OF HIS OWN. HE SEALED UP THE TIME BARIER TO BAR, JESUS' RE TURN TO THE FUTURE, AND DECREED.

THAT NO ONE SHOULD CALL HIM "JESUS HORA TIO HELICOPTER CHR ST EVER AGA N, ONLY "JESUS H CHRIST." AND THAT THE H STOOD FOR ONLY "H" WHEN THE CHILDREN'S SONG ABOUT T STARTED IN THE FUTURE, HE INT ERVENED TO CHANGE IT TO "JOHN JACOB JINGLEHEIMER SCHMIDT" TO KEEP UP APPEARANCES.

SO THAT'S WHY GODS ARE USUALLY BARRED FROM TIME TRAVE., WHAT THE "H" IN JESUS H CHRIST ACTUALLY STANDS FOR VERSUS WHAT IT'S CLAIMED TO STAND FOR, WHAT CHRISTIANITY'S SE CRET COMMANDMENTS D AND -1 ARE, AND EXACTLY HOW I DISCOV ERED IT ALL WHILE HELPING AN EXILED GOD ESCAPE YOUR WORLD. IT IS INTERESTING, YES?

HUH! BUT WHY DID JESUS HAVE TO AT TEND THERAPY SES SIONS IN THE FU TURE? AND WHY AREN'T OTHER GODS ABLE TO OP EN THE TIME BAR IER AFTER YAH WEH SEALED IT?

AND WHY SUCH DS LIKE FOR HELI COP TERS?

AND HELICOPTERS WERE INVENTED AFTER THE "JOHN JACOB JINGLEHEIMER SMITH" SONG STAR TED UP! DID THE TIME LINE GET BROKEN DUE TO YAHWEH'S MEDDLING THE SAME WAY IT DID FROM THE CHICKEN GOD'S MEDDL NG LATER?

YES, IT WAS A COMBINA TION OF THE TIMELINE'S BEING BROKEN AND HORATIO HELICOPTER'S BEING A TIME TRAVELER HIM SELF AND AFTER YAHWEH SEALED THE TIME BAR IER, IT WAS REINFORCED BY ONI AGENTS. TIME LINES CAN NOW BE CHANGED ONLY INDIRECT LY, BY DAMAG ING OTHER PARTS OF A GIVEN REALITY.

YAHWEH HARDENED JESUS' HEART AGAINST THE EXILED GOD, AS I SAID AS FOR WHY HE HOLDS A GRUDGE AGAINST ATT..

PING!

THAT SOUND MEANS WE HAVE ARRIVED AT THE SANCTUARY IF YOU TWO WOULD WAKE UP SUPER HOBSES?

CAN DO! SORRY WE HAVE TO CUT THIS SHORT!

WE CAN FILL HIM IN ON THIS STORY LATER!

I KNEW SUPER HOBSES BEST SO I WOKE HIM UP SARANNA MUSED A BIT MORE WHILE I DID IT

HOW OFFENDED MUST YAHWEH HAVE BEEN THAT JESUS WAS USING HIS TITTLE AS A SURNAME DURING THAT TIME? AND HOW ELSE WOULD YOU OFFEND HIM THAT MUCH?

ELSEWHERE AS IF TO ANSWER HER QUESTION

SO THOUGHTLESSLY MY EX LOVE GOES OFF AB OUT HIS STOCK OF NUCLEAR MISSILES PLUNGING INTO INFIDELS, BUT NEVER THINKS OF MY THREE HEAT SEEKING MOISTURE MIS SILES PLUNGING INTO HIM ANY MORE!

AND HE NAMED HIS HEAVEN COCK AYNE, AFTER BOTH OF US, SO HE SAID! BUT HIS NAME CAME FIRST AS ALWAYS! WHY NOT PUT ME FIRST AND NAME IT AYNE COCK? AT LEAST I TRACKED DOWN A FEW OF MY ANGEL DESERTERS AND REABSORBED ALL THEIR POWER! FOR ME TO WIN, THEY MUST LOSE!

"UHHH . . . STILL SO WEAK I DON'T KNOW WHY THEY COMPLAINED BEFORE I HOLLOWED THEM OUT! THEY HAD NO RIGHT TO! THEY'RE MY SERVANTS!

I'M THE IMP ORTANT ONE! I'M THE R KING!"*)

* TRANSLATED FROM FARTS

("AND WE . I, THE ONE AND ONLY TRIPLE BUTT, WILL BE KING OF KINGS AGAIN SOON! YES, MIR ROR, THINGS WILL BE SET RIGHT AGA N!")*

BWARAK! BWARAK! ("WHAT? NOT THAT ALARM! SOMEONE ON EARTH USED UNSHIELDED CEL DINO TECHNOLOGY WITHIN THE LAST TWELVE HOURS! CAN TURN THIS TO MY ADVANTAGE!")*

* TRANSLATED FROM FARTS

"MY EX-LOVE IS TOO BOUND TO THIS WORLD TO GO AFTER SUCH THINGS HIMSELF I'M NOT, BUT IT WOULD BE TOO SUSPICIOUS IF I DID SO! ESPECIALLY IF IT TURNS OUT TO BE RELATED TO A PROPHET, WHICH 'LL HAVE TO CHECK!"*)

* TRANSLATED FROM FARTS

SOON RING RING J THE HOLY, HOLY, HOLY ONE IS CALLING. J AH, MY TRUE LORD'S RING TONE!

SOON AFTER THAT ("YALDABAAWK, MY LORD! YALDY WALDY, MY BELOVED LORDY WORDY! DID YOU HEAR THE CEL DINO TECH ALARM GO OFF? IT'S ALSO TIED TO A PROPHETIC THAT COULD BRING YOUR DOWNFALL! TOOK INITIATIVE AND CALLED AR PHAXAD!")*

CEL-DINO TECH? AFTER ALL THESE YEARS? AND THERE'S A PROPHETIC INVOLVED, TOO? TELL ME OF IT, MY LOVE, AND THEN SEND ARPHAXAD IN!

* TRANSLATED FROM FARTS

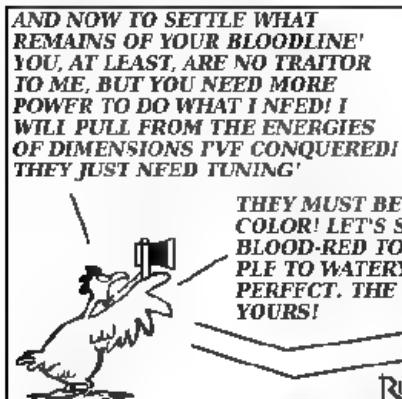
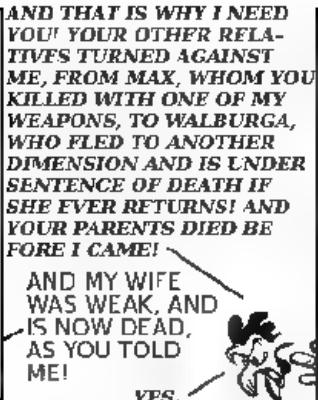
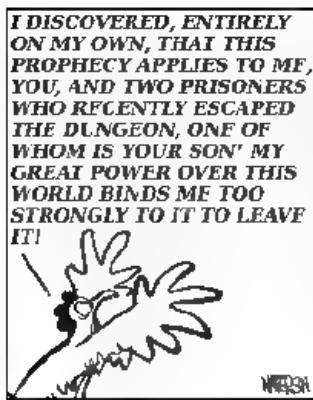
AFTER THE EXPLANATION.. I WAS SUPPOSED TO TAKE STOCK IN THE OLD PROPHET'S ALMANAC? I THOUGHT IT WAS ALL HOGWASH BY NOW! AND IF THAT NANO-BRAINED GUN GNOME HAD BEEN ABLE TO AIM, IT WOULD ALL BE MOOT! STILL, YOU'VE DONE WELL. TAKE THE DAY OFF, OR HAVE THE NEW BUTT RECRUITS SLAUGHTER SOMETHING. I DON'T CARE!

WHERE IS AR PHAXAD NOW?

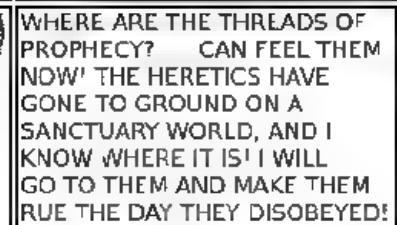
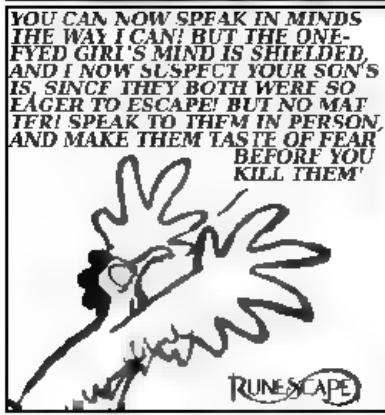
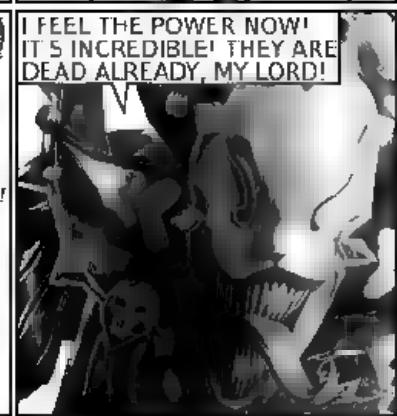
"AS YOU WISH, LORD AR PHAXAD IS OUTSIDE THE DOOR. I GUESS I'LL GO SATISFY MYSELF WITH THAT CYLINDRICAL ASTEROID I FOUND ON MY LAST OUTING INTO SPACE!")*

GOOD! PROPHETIC BREAKING AWAITS!

* TRANSLATED FROM FARTS



RUNESCAPE



THAT IS ALL I HAVE
EVER WANTED
FROM YOU



I'VE PLACED SPATIAL AND TELEPATHIC TETHERS ON YOU! REPORT WHEN YOU ARRIVE WHERE THEY ARE, AND LET ME KNOW WHEN YOUR MISSION IS COMPLETE! I WILL PULL YOU BACK HERE FOR YOUR REWARD!

I WILL DO SO, MY LORD!

THAT TOOK MUCH MORE POWER OUT OF ME THAN I EXPECTED, ESPECIALLY TUNING ALL THOSE ENERGIES! BUT IF THERE'D BEEN ONLY THE FIRST CHANGE OF COLOR, NOT THE SECOND, THE TRANSFORMATION WOULDN'T HAVE WORKED! AND HE MUST BE STRONG ENOUGH TO ACT AS MY AGENT IN PLACES I CANNOT GO!

IT WILL ALL BE OVER SOON! ALL TRAITORS SHALL DIE, BY EITHER MY HAND OR HIS! HA HA HA!

IN THE CHICKEN'S HELL, N'FEATHERWORLD

THERE'S BEEN A BROWN-OUT. SEVERAL OF THE CELLS HAVE DEVELOPED BREACHES.

THE BREACHES HAVE OPENED UP A PATH TO THE OUTER WALL AND A SECTION OF THE GATES.

HOW DID ANYONE TAMF AND RIDE SOME OF THE GHOST-ZOMBIES? SECU...
NO CARRIER

CELLS 7879, 7573, 7871, AND 8333 ARE NO LONGER SEAL...
NO CARRIER

YOU ARE HERE

A CHICKEN NON-WORSHIPER, A MASS MURDERER OF CHICKEN WORSHIPPERS, AND AN EATER OF HONEY MUSTARD ON HOT DOGS HAVE POTENTIALLY ESCAPED.

WHY ARE THOSE CRIMINALS TOGETHER?

ALL COMMANDMENTS ARE EQUAL! KEEP QUESTIONING, WARDEN, AND I'LL DOWNGRADE YOU TO PRISONER AND PUT YOU IN AN INTACT CELL!

BACK ON EARTH...

LORD AND MASTER, THERE'S BEEN A JAILBREAK IN YOUR HELL. TWO OUTSIDERS TOOK ADVANTAGE OF A POWER FAILURE AND RELEASSED UP TO THREE PRISONERS, ACCORDING TO THE WARDENS' REPORTS!

BILLIONS AND BILLIONS OF CELLS, AND YOU EXPECT ME TO CARE ABOUT ONLY THREE? THE POWER FAILURE WAS NECESSARY FOR MY SURVIVAL! DON'T BOTHER ME WITH SUCH TRIVIALITIES!

LORD AND MASTER, THERE HASN'T BEEN A JAILBREAK THERE SINCE IT WAS UNDER CONSTRUCTION AND YOU WERE SENDING OFFENDERS THERE ANYWAY! IT IS CONCERNING!

CONCERN NOTED AND IGNORED! IF THE WARDENS ARE CONCERNED, TELL THEM THE SAME!

YES, LORD

AND MASTER.

SEVERAL DAYS LATER, IN THE GHOST REALM...

I GOT A LETTER IN THE MAIL. NO ADDRESS, BUT THE NAME IS THAT CLIENT I HAD THAT I TOLD CALVIN AND SARANNA ABOUT! HE SAID HE BROKE HIS MATE OUT OF HELL ALONG WITH SOMEONE WHO PUT HONEY MUSTARD ON HOT DOGS, BUT HAD TO LEAVE A PSYCHOPATHIC MASS MURDERER BEHIND!

GOOD! SOMETHING WORKED OUT!

SO SOMETIMES PEOPLE WHO ARE ACTUALLY BAD END UP IN THAT HELL! I SUSPECTED AS MUCH, SINCE AN EXTREMELY FEW OF HIS COMMANDMENTS FORBID ACTUALLY BAD THINGS!

HE ALSO SAID THAT, DUE TO THE TIMELINE REPAIRS THAT MADE EVERYONE STOP AGING, BUT NOT DYING, FOR ABOUT TEN YEARS MEANT THAT HELL WAS A LOT BIGGER THAN HE EXPECTED, AND HIS MATE HAD PICKED UP SOME OBSCURE BLASPHEMIES FROM PRISONERS IN OTHER CELLS WHICH HE LISTED IN CASE THEY WERE USEFUL!

SOME OF THEM WERE THINGS I'D NEVER HEARD, EVEN FROM KRALTAR! I SENT THE LIST TO TIFFANY SO SHE COULD MAKE SURE THEY'D BE USED AGAINST THE CHICKEN!

NOW THAT YOU MENTION KRALTAR, I JUST GOT A TRANSMISSION FROM CALVIN MENTIONING HIM AS WELL!

LIGHT SPEED TRAVEL IS MONOTONOUS, BUT I'M FINALLY OUT OF THE TRINITY'S RANGE, AND THEIR MIND SHIELD STILL HOLDS, SO MY THOUGHTS CAN BE MY OWN! MY LONG PLAN IS COMING TO FRUITON! THE RECORDS THAT I WAS BORN EIGHT MONTHS AFTER MY PARENTS WERE MARRIED ARE SEALED, MY PARENTS ARE DEAD FOR ABANDONING ME, WITH A FAMILY FRIEND UNTIL THEY HAD MORE CHILDREN AND GENEROUSLY TOOK ME BACK, I WORKED TO LOSE THE SMALL-TOWN ACCENT AND GET AN EDUCATION ALONG WITH MY SO-CALLED SIBLINGS, WHICH MAKES ME RESPECTABLE; I SERVE THE MOST POWERFUL GOD UNTIL I TAKE ALL HIS ENEMIES DOWN, I GAIN ENOUGH POWER TO REPLACE HIM!



I KEEP THIS FORM THE TRINITY WILL DIE BY MY HAND TOO! NO ONE WILL EVER SNEER AT ME FOR BEING WHITE TRASH EVER AGAIN! NO ONE WILL EVER HURT ME AGAIN! NO ONE WILL BE CAPABLE OF HURTING ME EVER AGAIN! I'LL PUNISH EVERYONE UNTIL THEY LOVE ME UNCONDITIONALLY! NOT LIKE THE CHICKEN OR THE TRINITY, WHO ONLY GET IT AS LIP SERVICE!

ONLY! I AM! HOLY!

IN SPACE...

AND INHERITING ALL THAT MONEY FROM MY RICH MOTHER-IN-LAW ONLY MAKES ME MORE HOLY! I DON'T KNOW WHY SHE LASHED OUT AT ME AFTER LEFT HER ALONE FOR MONTHS AFTER SHE WAS WIDOWED, BUT SAYING SHE MIGHT DISINHERIT ME? NO! ONE! DISRESPECTS! ME! LIKE! THAT! OF COURSE I THREW THAT HOURLONG FIT ABOUT HOW MUCH I DESPISED HER BEHIND HER BACK AND IN FRONT OF CALVIN, AND THEN REFUSED TO TAKE HIM TO VISIT HER EVER AGAIN, BUT NO ONE WOULD BELIEVE HIM OVER ME, AND I'D RUIN HIS LIFE IF HE TOLD! THANK GOD I BARELY HAD TO KEEP UP THE FAKE NICE ACT BEFORE SHE GOT ALZHEIMER'S! ALL RHON HAD TO DO WAS BECOME EXECUTOR OF HER WILL BY FORGING HER SIGNATURE!



AND WITH BOTH RHON AND HER MOTHER DEAD NOW, IT'S ALL MINE, AND NO ONE CAN BLAME ANYTHING ON ME BECAUSE ALL CREDIBLE WITNESSES ARE GONE! WHICH REMINDS ME, I DO WISH THE TRINITY HADN'T MADE SATAN A LOST SOUL! HE WOULD HAVE MADE A USEFUL SCAPEROOT ONCE

WON! I'LL JUST HAVE TO BLAME THINGS ON HIS UNSPECIFIED RELATIVES, "THE DEEP DEVILS!"

SANCTUARY PLANET ZARTOK 3



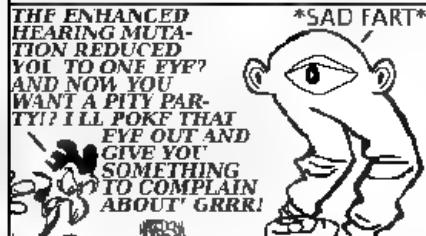
IT WAS GOOD TO BE OUTSIDE THE DUNGEON KRALTAH HAD APPARENTLY BEEN HERE BEFORE, AND KNEW HOW TO FILL OUT ALL THE PROPER PAPERWORK TO GET US SPIRITUAL ASYLUM

SARANNA GAVE ME SOME POINTERS ON HOW TO DEAL WITH THE SNOW DEMONS. BUT SAID I'D HAVE TO MAKE THE ACTUAL DEAL MYSELF

WE HAD ENOUGH PRIVACY IN OUR LIVING QUARTERS THAT IT WOULD WORK, MUCH LIKE IN THE GHOST LIBRARY I WAS NERVOUS ABOUT BOTH THE DEAL AND WHO'D BE FOLLOWING JS, BUT KRALTAH SAID THE THREADS OF PROPHECY WERE MUCH HARDER TO FOLLOW ON A PLANET AS OPPOSED TO IN SPACE, WHICH MEANT IT WOULD BE EASIER TO HIDE HIS SPACE CRAFT HERE

I SWAPPED OUT THE LAST NON-ZARNIUM COATED PART, AND THE ENHANCED STEALTH IS WORKING! BETTER THAN THE OLD DAYS OF SCATTERING SHIP PIECES ACROSS MULTIPLE PLANETS

I CONTACTED BRIAN TELEPATHICALLY TO KEEP HIM INFORMED OF ALL THESE DEVELOPMENTS. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I'D DONE IT, BUT THANKFULLY IT WORKED FLAWLESSLY. I WONDERED HOW FRUSTRATED THE CHICKEN WAS AT NOT BEING ABLE TO STOP US AND HAVING TO WAIT ON AN AGENT INSTEAD. BUT GIVEN WHAT I'D SEEN OF HIM I COULD GUESS THAT



THE DEAL I MADE WITH THE SNOW DEMONS WAS TEMPORARY. THEY'D HELP ME BRING SNOWMEN TO LIFE TO TAKE DOWN THEIR OLD ENEMY THE LUMBERCHICKEN. IN RETURN, I'D MAKE THE SNOWMEN STRONGER THAN ANY ORDINARY SNOWMEN BY FUSING THEM WITH OTHER ELDritch ENTITIES. (ZHUPARR KNEW SOME WHO'D BE WILLING TO COOPERATE, AND NO PERMANENT DEAL MEANT NO PERMANENT SACRIFICE.)



I CALL UPON THE MIGHTY SNOW DEMONS FOR AID!



AAGHHH!

POOF!

UNLKE WITH SARANNA, THEY SENT AN ACTUAL AGENT OF THEIRS TO DEAL WITH ME SINCE WE WERE OUTSIDE THE CHICKEN'S SIGHT, AND IT WAS COLD ENOUGH ON ZARTOK 3 FOR IT TO SURVIVE WITHOUT HELP

YOUR TERMS ARE ACCEPTABLE SO LONG AS THE LUMBERCHICKEN REMAINS IN POWER IN ANY FORM, WE WILL STAND WITH YOU AGAINST HIM!

THE "IN ANY FORM" PART MADE ME UNEASY CONSIDERING THE PART OF SARANNA'S VISION THAT WOULDN'T CLEAR UP. BUT ZHUPARR ASSURED ME AFTERWARD THAT THE TERM WAS USED JUST TO MAKE SURE ALL THE BASES WERE COVERED AFTER THAT I STARTED PRACTICING MY NEW POWERS

AWAKEN, ELDritch SNOW WARRIOR

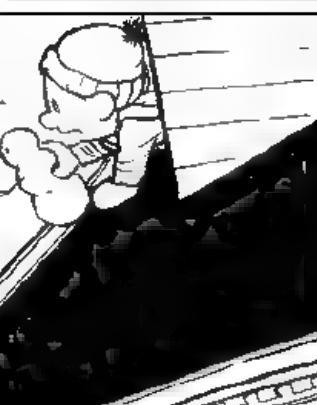


I DO NEED YOUR HELP! BUT YOU'VE GOT TO THINK FOR YOURSELVES! YOU'RE ALL INDIVIDUALS!

Like me!

yes! we're all individuals

MY ELDritch SNOWMEN TOOK WELL TO TRAINING DESPITE SOME INITIAL ISSUES



TRAINING THEM TO FIGHT EFFECTIVELY WAS ALSO TRICKY. THEY DIDN'T HAVE SUPER HOBSES NATURAL WEAPONS FROM BEING A TIGER PERSON NOR HIS ELDritch POWERS. THEY DIDN'T HAVE KRALTAH'S NATURAL WEAPONS FROM BEING A CELESTIAL DINOSAUR PERSON, NOR HIS TRAINING. THEY DIDN'T HAVE SARANNA'S SPIRITUAL VISION. NOT THAT IT WOULD BE MUCH USE IN ACTUAL COMBAT I THOUGHT! I COULD GET AROUND THAT BY SHEER NUMBERS, SO I MADE AS MANY OF THEM AS I COULD.

EVENTUALLY WHEN CALLING UP AN ELDritch ENTITY FOR MY LATEST SNOWMAN, I DID THE EQUIVALENT OF DIALING THE WRONG PHONE NUMBER WHEN MY CONCENTRATION WAVERED

TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE! NOW, O GREAT SNOW DEMONS AND ELDritch ONES WHERE WAS IT?



IENDED UP REACHING A CELESTIAL YETI INSTEAD. HIS ORIGINAL DIMENSION HAD BEEN WRECKED BY THE CHICKEN IN MUCH THE SAME WAY BRIAN'S HAD BEEN, SO HE WAS MORE THAN WILLING TO HELP TAKE THE CHICKEN DOWN

JESUS HORATIO HELICOPTER CHRIST'S PERSONALITY GHOST! WHO ARE YOU?



DEPENDS ON WHO'S ASKING!

IT WAS A GOOD THING THAT KRALTAH HAD TOLD US ALL THE REST OF THAT STORY ON OUR DOWNTIME SINCE THE OATH FROM IT PIQUED HIS CURIOSITY. HE DIDN'T WANT TO GIVE HIS TRUE NAME, INSISTING I CALL HIM SYLVESTER. IT TURNED OUT THAT HE AND SOME OF HIS CELESTIAL FRIENDS KNEW KUNG FU, AND THEY'D BE WILLING TO TEACH IT TO THE ELDritch SNOWMEN



NOW THIS POSITION IS...



ACCORDING TO SARANNA'S VISION THE ODDS THAT THE CEL YETIS WOULD KEEP THEIR END OF THE DEAL WAS 94% ASIDE FROM THAT SHE'D SPENT MOST OF HER TIME HERE RELAXING WHOEVER D BE FOLLOWING US HADN'T ARRIVED YET, BUT SHE'D SPENT YEARS IN THAT DUNGEON AND TOOK ADVANTAGE OF BEING OUT OF IT SO DID KRALTA



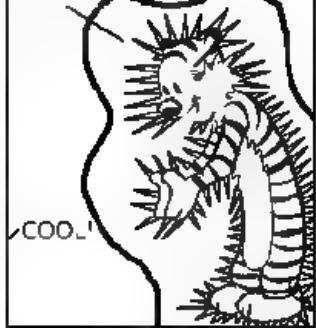
SUPER HOBBS SHOWED ME HOW ALL HIS SIX ELEMENTS WORKED BOTH SPAWNING THEM AND TURNING INTO THEM HIMSELF



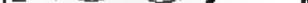
IT WORKED! I'LL DEFEND MYSELF WITH IT AS BEST I CAN!



AND NOW I'VE CHANGED INTO PRICKLE ELEMENTAL FORM!

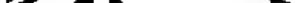


AND NOW I'M SPAWNING AIR UNDER MYSELF TO PUSHER ME UP I DON'T HAVE TELEKINESIS, BUT IT'S THE NEXT BEST THING! STILL COOL! RUNESCAPE



IT WAS MUCH THE SAME WITH VOID. HE COULD TAKE BRIEF SHORTCUTS THROUGH SPACE TIME WITH IT AS WELL AS HIDE FROM ANYONE. METAL AND BOOM USING BOOM TO BLOW HIMSELF UP AND THEN PUT HIMSELF BACK TOGETHER WAS BOTH DISTURBING AND AWESOME

I'M STILL HERE! FROOM!



THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES CHEWED HIM OUT FOR TESTING THAT UNTIL HE POINTED OUT THAT HE'D CAUSED NO DAMAGE THEY TOOK THE CONCEPT OF A SANCTUARY WORLD SERIOUSLY

IF ONLY THEY'D KNOWN THAT WHOEVER FOLLOWED US WOULDN'T TAKE IT SERIOUSLY

THEY'RE ON THIS WORLD! WHERE ARE THEY?

AT LEAST MY ELDritch SNOW MEN DIDN'T HAVE THE VULNERABILITIES THAT BEING MADE OF SNOW WOULD NORMALLY GIVE THEM AND THE NEWEST ONES COULD MAKE ELDritch SNOW MEN THEMSELVES

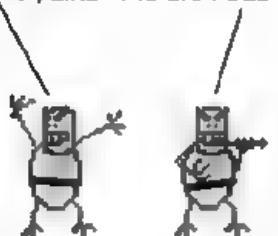


SOME OF THE SNOWMEN, OR AT LEAST THEIR ELDritch HALVES, HAD SOME MARTIAL ARTS TRAINING, AND WERE ABLE TO ADAPT CEL YETI KUNG FU TECHNIQUES FOR THEIR OWN USE. IT'D ONLY BEEN A FEW WEEKS, BUT I HAD A DECENT-SIZED SNOWMAN ARMY



GOOD! KEEP IT UP!

HERE'S HOW TO USE IMPROVISED WEAPONRY, LIKE THIS SKI POLE!



Chris Pirillo

WHILE THE ELDritch SNOW MEN TRAINED, I PICKED UP A FEW MORE SPELLS THAT WOULD BE USEFUL IN THE UP-COMING BATTLE. SARANNA KNEW HOW TO OPEN UP A SCRYING PORTAL, SO WE COULD KEEP TRACK OF THINGS FROM A DISTANCE



WHETHER DEAD PAST OR LIVING PRESENT, LIMIT NOT MY VIEW

SEE, CALVIN? IT WORKED

KRALTA FUGHT THE BUREAUCRACY TO GET THE RIGHT TO HAVE ANTI-CEL BIRD AMMUNITION IN HIS LASER RIFLE SOLELY FOR SELF-DEFENSE PURPOSES. WE WERE FAR FROM THE ONLY ONES HIDING FROM OUR ENEMIES HERE. NEUTRAL TERRITORY OR NOT



FINALLY! I CAN ACTUALLY USE MY WEAPON AS MORE THAN A FANCY CLUB!

Chris Pirillo

THE SNOW DEMONS ALTERED THE DEAL WITH ME AFTER CONFERRING AMONG THEMSELVES. THEY COULD SENSE THINGS WE COULDN'T, AND TAUGHT ME HOW TO SUMMON THE ULTIMATE ELDritch SNOW ENTITY IF THE FUTURE SHADOWS REMAINED UNCHANGED, THEY SAID! I WOULD NEED ITS HELP, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS DANGEROUS



ZINCORCAL CAN DO MUCH! THE BIG Z!

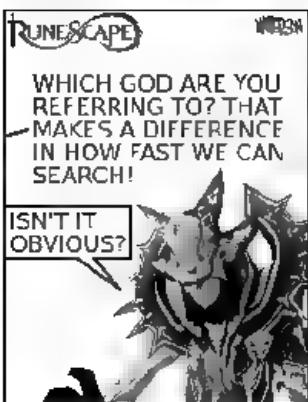
AND DANGER WAS COMING HAS A SIX-YEAR-OLD HUMAN BOY NAMED CALVIN CHECKED IN HERE? I AM ON A MISSION FROM GOD!



YOU AND SO MANY OTHERS

RUNESCAPE WHICH GOD ARE YOU REFERRING TO? THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN HOW FAST WE CAN SEARCH!

ISN'T IT OBVIOUS?



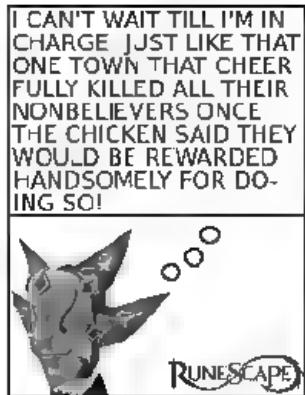
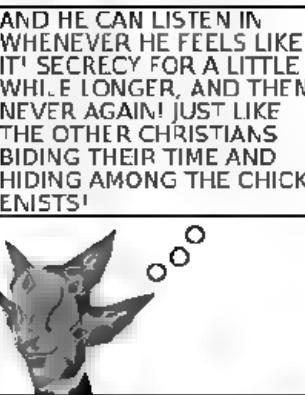
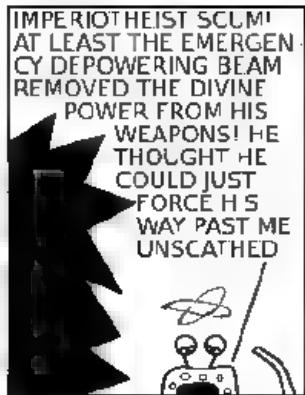
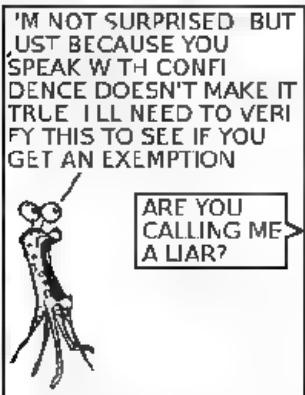
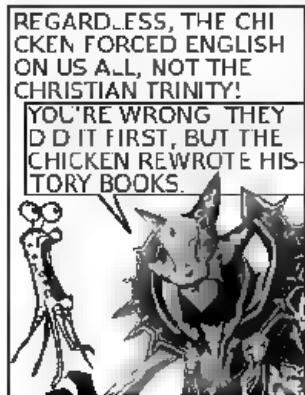
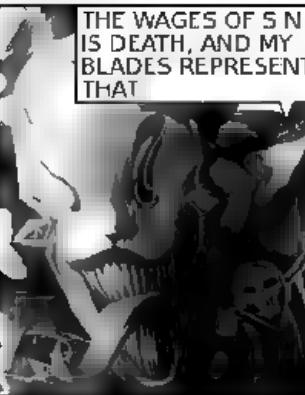
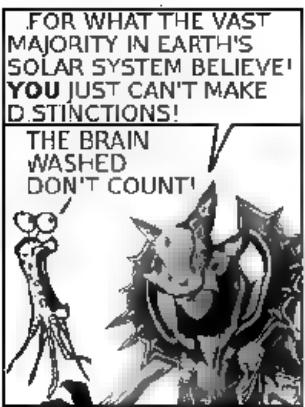
NO! IF IT'S ABOUT THE FIGHT OVER THE DOMAIN OF UNEXPECTED CITRUS RHYMES, IT DOESN'T MATTER WHETHER YOU'RE FOR THE GODDESS FLAZZORRINGE, HER BROTHER FLAZUMMELLO, OR HER NON-BINARY SUBLING FLAZDURRIN. WE'VE SPENT TOO MUCH TIME ON THAT!



ALSO, THIS IS A NEUTRAL WORLD, WHICH MEANS THERE ARE RULES ABOUT WHICH WEAPONS YOU CAN HAVE HERE WITHOUT THE PROPER PERMITS! THOSE BLADES ARE DIVINELY POWERED AND VERY MUCH RESTRICTED! YOU'LL HAVE TO SURRENDER THEM FOR NOW!

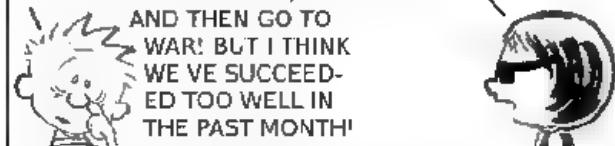


MY GOD BESTOWED THEM UPON ME, AND YOUR TRYING TO RESTRICT ME IS IMPINGING ON MY RELIGIOUS FREEDOM!



ITS RANKS HAVE SWELLED MUCH FASTER THAN I THOUGHT THEY WOULD! I FIGURED WE'D GET A SMALL PRACTICE ARMY, GET TRANSPORTATION BACK TO EARTH, HIDE OUT THERE WHILE RECRUITING THE REST OF THE ARMY.

AND THEN GO TO WAR! BUT I THINK WE'VE SUCCEEDED TOO WELL IN THE PAST MONTH!



YES, THAT WAS THE PLAN! BUT SEEING AS WHOEVER FOLLOWED US HASN'T SHOWN UP YET, WE'LL PROBABLY NEED AT LEAST SOME OF YOUR ARMY TO TAKE THEM DOWN!



BUH I'M INCLINED TO AGREE WITH SARANNA LEAVING AN UNKNOWN ENEMY HERE COULD RESULT IN MUCH COLLATERAL DAMAGE WE SHOULD KNOW WHO WE'RE DEALING WITH, EVEN THOUGH IT'S A GREATER RISK ARE THERE ANY TROOPS WITH SPECIAL ABILITIES BE SIDES SUPER HOBSES THAT WE COULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF?



THERE HASN'T BEEN ANYTHING ON THE NEWS ABOUT AN AGENT OF THE CHICKEN'S SHOWING UP HERE, BUT THERE ARE A FEW SPECIALLY POWERED TROOPS, YES...



FRST, ONE OF THE ELDritch ENTITIES IS ACTUALLY FROM WHATEVER DIMENSION AUNT WALBURGA IS IN. HE SAYS SHE SENT HIM TO HELP ME SINCE SHE COULDN'T COME HERSELF.



JIM DAVIS/NODAM

AND THAT'S WHY SUPER-HOBSES CAN SEE CLYDE, TOO! HE EVEN MADE A QUICK SKETCH FOR ME OF WHAT CLYDE REALLY LOOKS LIKE!



I'M CURIOUS MYSELF!

SUPER HOBSES VOLUNTEERED TO KEEP HIM IN LINE, JUST IN CASE, AND HE'S NOT IN SNOWMAN FORM LIKE THE OTHERS CLYDE? ARE YOU HERE? SHOW THEM!



HUH? WHAT FORM IS HE IN, THEN?

BURP

THERE HE IS! HE HAS PERFECT INVISIBILITY TO ALL SENSES UNLESS HE WANTS TO SHOW HIMSELF, AND HIS BURPS AREN'T ORDINARY BURPS!



HE'S PARTIALLY VISIBLE TO ME, JUST LIKE SUPER-HOBSES WHEN HE USES HIS VOID POWER! SO HE MUST USE VOID IN A SIMILAR WAY!



HE SAYS HE LIVES IN VOID INSTEAD OF TAPPING INTO IT!

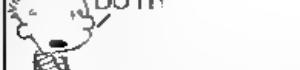
HIS ELDritch POWERED BURPS WARD OFF ENEMIES! WHICH LEADS TO THE OTHER SPECIALLY POWERED ONE IN THE TROOPS: ELDritch ERDRICK.

THE ONE WHO KEEPS TALKING ABOUT HOW TOTALLY ELDritch HE IS, BUT ISN'T TALL THAT POWERFUL?



RIGHT!

ERDRICK DOES HAVE SOME UNUSUAL IDEAS ON HOW TO USE CHI, THE POWER THAT KUNG FU IS BASED ON, AND HE FIGURED OUT HOW TO COMBINE CLYDE'S ELDritch BURPS WITH CHI TO MAKE THEM EVEN STRONGER! HE SHOWED THE CELTYS, AND NOW THEY'RE TEACHING EVERYONE HOW TO DO IT!



SO WHAT IS THE PLAN FOR THIS? IS IT TO DRIVE THE CHICKEN AWAY VIA A CONTINUOUS PLANET WIDE ELDritch KUNG FU BURPING CONTEST, OR SOMETHING EQUALLY RIDICULOUS THAT WORKS ANYWAY? DUE TO THE VERY NATURE OF ELDritch POWER?



NO, IT'S NOT QUITE STRONG ENOUGH FOR GODS, AND I AS THEIR LEADER DON'T HAVE MUCH APTITUDE FOR CHI, AT LEAST NOT WITHOUT A LOT MORE PRACTICE. ALL I CAN MANAGE NOW IS THE ENHANCED BURP ATTACK!



STILL, IT IS ANOTHER WEAPON YOU HAVE.

THE FINAL SUMMONING THE SNOW DEMONS TAUGHT ME SEEKS LIKE A BETTER OPTION FOR THE CHICKEN. IT'S COMPLICATED, THOUGH, AND I SHOULD HOLD OFF 'TIL IT'S ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. KRALTA, DO YOU STILL HAVE THE REMAINS OF THAT BUTT-SOLDIER IN THE SHIP?



DO, SINCE ITS DEATH RITUALS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED ON ITS OWN WORLD IF POSSIBLE. I ASSUME THE SUMMONING REQUIRES AN ENEMY OR THE REMAINS OF ONE AS ONE OF ITS STEPS, YES?



YES, AS WELL AS A FRIEND OR THE REMAINS OF ONE, A FEW MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, A CANTALOUPE (HE WON'T TAKE ANY SUBSTITUTES FOR THAT ONE), AND SO ON. IT'S A LONG LIST, AND WE'LL NEED TO MAKE A SUPPLY RUN TO FIND SOME THINGS ON IT!



ALSO, SARANNA, I LOOKED INTO WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT TRYING TO MAKE PEACE WITH THE FLYING SPAGHETTI MONSTER. AMITABA POINTED ME TOWARD HIS ASSOCIATE AVALOKITESHVARA, AND HE AND ERIS' MESSENGER ST. GULIK WILL SPEAK ON MY BEHALF!



BUT THAT STILL DOESN'T SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF HOW TO GET THE ARMY WHERE WE NEED IT! SARANNA, DO YOU KNOW HOW TO OPEN ORDINARY PORTALS AS WELL AS SCRYING PORTALS?



BEFORE SHE ANSWERS, REMEMBER THAT ALL ORDINARY PORTALS ARE FORCED TO BE ONE WAY PORTALS OFF THIS WORLD TO PREVENT ITS INVASION!

REMEMBER! BUT I CAN'T BE PERFECT, OR WE WOULD BE SAFE HERE.

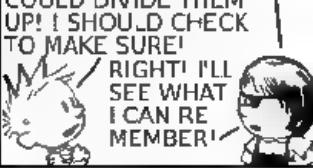


AND REJMMONING ALL OF THEM WOULD TAKE A LOT MORE TIME AND ENERGY THAN JUST MOVING THEM! I SHOULD KNOW! SORRY, GO ON THERE IS A SPELL THE GOBLINS USE, BUT IT ALSO REQUIRES AN ENEMY'S REMAINS



SUMMONING ZINCORCAL WILL CONSUME THE ENEMY'S REMAINS! DOES THE PORTAL SPELL DO THAT, TOO?

I YES, UNFORTUNATELY WAIT IF THEY BOTH ONLY NEED SOME OF THE REMAINS, WE COULD DIVIDE THEM UP! I SHOULD CHECK TO MAKE SURE!



RIGHT! I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN REMEMBER!

WHOEVER ENDS UP FOLLOWING US WILL LIKELY ALSO LEAVE REMAINS AFTER WE KILL THEM. THE SITUATION'S NOT AS DIRE AS IT SEEMS ALTHOUGH IT IS GOOD TO BE PREPARED, SINCE WE DO NOT KNOW WHO IS COMING!



ASSUMING WE HAVE ENOUGH REMAINS, WHAT IF WE OPEN A REALLY SMALL PORTAL, JUST TO MAKE SURE WE CAN DO IT? IT'S TOO SMALL FOR THE ENEMY TO ACTUALLY GO THROUGH, IT'S A LOWER RISK!



THAT'S A GOOD IDEA!

WHILE WE FINAGLED WITH HOW TO MAKE A MINI-PORTAL, THE HUNT WAS ON

IT'S SUCH A PAIN NOT BEING ABLE TO SEE THE THREADS OF PROPHECY HERE WHEN I'M GOING AT LIGHT SPEED AT LEAST I CAN CLAIM RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION



FROM WHATEVER DAMAGE I DO! IT'S SUCH FUN!

RUNESCAPE

THESE PEOPLE HERE DON'T LIKE CHRISTIANS, BECAUSE THERE'S RIGHT AND THERE'S WRONG! AND ONCE I'M OFFICIALLY THE ONLY TRUE CHRISTIAN, I'LL ENFORCE IT PROPERLY! AND IF THIS GUY DOESN'T GET OUT OF MY WAY, I'LL



THROW HIM INTO THAT WALL!

NO IT'S MORE FUN TO KILL! ONLY WISH I HAD GUNS INSTEAD OF BLADES!

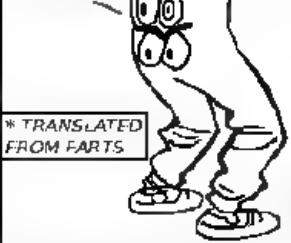


BACK ON EARTH... WHY IS THE MISSION TAKING SO LONG? ALL HE HAS TO DO IS KILL A FEW KIDS, PLUS ANYONE ELSE IN HIS WAY! I'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE MYSELF FEEL BETTER! OKAY, I DECLARF COMMANDMENT #9064B THOL SHALL NOT COMBINE THE FLAVORS OF RASPBERRY AND CHI POTLE!



RUNESCAPE

("I WISH I KNEW HOW THE MISSION WAS GOING MYSELF, MY LORD")



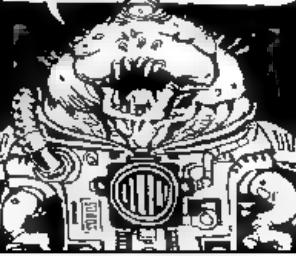
* TRANSLATED FROM FARTS

BACK ON ZARTOK 3... GOOD! IT WORKED! WE HAVE PLENTY OF BONES LEFT, AND THIS PINPRICK OF A PORTAL IS A PROOF OF CONCEPT!



ALERT!

LORD AND PROTECTOR THROCKMORTON Y G HAS DECLARED PLANET WIDE LOCKDOWN A SKY BARRIER HAS BEEN SET UP TO PREVENT



THE SUBJECT'S ESCAPE, SINCE THEY HAVE NO RECORD OF ARRIVING BY SPACECRAFT THEY ARE ARMED AND EXTREMELY DANGEROUS A SQUAD OF OMEGA FLYING LEATHERNECKS HAS BEEN SPATCHED TO AID IN THE SEARCH



THE TV NEWS BULLETIN SOUNDED OMINOUS ENOUGH BUT THEN THEY CUT TO WHO THE SUBJECT WAS

HERE IS AN IMAGE OF THE SUSPECT, ALONG WITH A VOICE RECORDING



I AM A TRUE CHRISTIAN WITH MORALS!

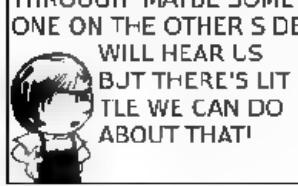


THAT'S DAD'S VOICE! WHAT'S GOING ON?!

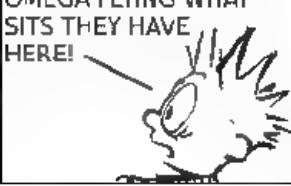
APPARENTLY, MAX'S BROTHER'S MORE EVIL THAN EITHER HE OR I THOUGHT SARANNA, CAN THE PORTAL BE SEALED OR ENLARGED BY ANY MEANS THAT DO NOT REQUIRE MORE ENEMY REMAINS?



NOT AS FAR AS I KNOW WE SHOULD JUST LEAVE THE PINPRICK OPEN FOR NOW, UNTIL THE THREAT'S GONE AND WE CAN ENLARGE IT WITH OUT LETTING HIM THROUGH. MAYBE SOMEONE ON THE OTHER SIDE WILL HEAR US BUT THERE'S LITTLE WE CAN DO ABOUT THAT!



WHO KNOWS HOW POWERFUL HE IS NOW? I ONLY HOPE SUPER HOBBS AND THE ELDRITCH SNOW ARMY ARE ENOUGH TO STOP HIM ALONG WITH THOSE OMEGA FLYING WHAT SITS THEY HAVE HERE!



WE'RE STRONGER THAN ANYONE THINKS! AND YOU HAVE A MENTAL LINK WITH US ALL, SO YOU KNOW HOW MANY OF US THERE ARE!



RIGHT! I SHOULD LET BRIAN KNOW, TOO!

BACK AMONG THE GHOSTS

I HAVE BAD NEWS. ACCORDING TO CALVIN'S LATEST TRANSMISSION, THE ONE WHO HAS FOLLOWED HIM FOR THE PROPHETCY'S SAKE IS YOUR BROTHER, AND HE IS IN A NEW SUPER-POWERED FORM



DEAR GODS FIRST HE LATCHED ONTO THE CHRISTIANS AND HELPED THE RAPSHOOT ALONG, SO THAT ALL THE COMPASSIONATE CHRISTIANS WERE WIPE OUT! AND THEN HE SWITCHED TO THE CHICKEN! AND NOW HE'S MADE A DEAL WITH WHO KNOWS WHAT TO GET A BUNCH OF SUPER POWERS, SO HE CAN DO MORE KINSLAYING!?

DON'T FORGET, HE'S TARGETING MY SISTER TOO!

RIGHT, SLAYING IS SLAYING! AT LEAST THERE'S A DECENT SIZED ARMY BEHIND THEM BOTH!



AS THE SAYING GOES, 170492365492591921-1935875680985029388-1929824491593257257-2306260038564433350-1625837644161501318-3244261246331763880-1423716890534360553-2306275247481866272. HE WILL GET WHAT HE DESERVES AT SOME POINT.



I HOPE SO! HE'S GOTTEN AWAY WITH FAR TOO MUCH!

MEEN Chris Pith BUT YOUR BRINGING UP YOUR EVIL GOD OF ETHNIC CLEANSING ISN'T A GOOD SIGN!



IT PARALLELS WHAT IS HAPPENING. REMEMBER, BEFORE HIS ASCENSION, HE WAS OF AN OPPRESSED GROUP.

AND MY BROTHER THINKS HE'S OPPRESSED.

MEEN

BACK ON ZARTOK-3

NICE WORK, SYL VESTER! NOW IF YOU CAN TEACH SOME OF THE OTHERS HOW TO ROCKET BURP, WE'LL HAVE YET ANOTHER ADVANTAGE!



BURP!

I HAVE CONTACTED THE AUTHORITIES AND TOLD THEM WHO THEIR ENEMY IS AND HOW YOU AND SARANNA ARE LIKELY THE TARGETS, HAVING ESCAPED FROM A GOD'S DUNGEON AND BEING INVOLVED IN A PROPHECY AGAINST THAT GOD

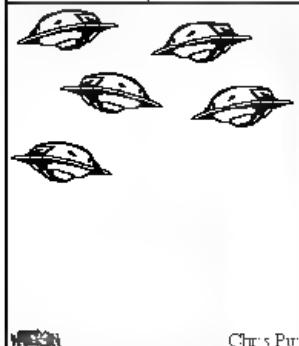


THANKS! ONLY HOPE WE'RE READY WHEN HE ARRIVES!

THE AUTHORITIES' REINFORCEMENTS SHOULD ARRIVE HERE SOON AS WELL.



THE OMEGA FLYING LEATHER NECKS WERE QUICK TO ARRIVE



MEEN

SUPER HOBBE'S TRANSFORMED INTO A METAL FORM, JUST IN CASE



I'M AS READY AS I'LL EVER BE

I PRACTICED MY BURP ATTACK, AND TAUGHT IT TO SARANNA, WHO HAD ABOUT AS MUCH APITUDE FOR IT AS I DID



THE CEL YETIS AND ELDRITCH SNOWMEN PRACTICED THEIR KUNG FU ALL THE CEL YETIS AND A FEW OF THE ELDRITCH SNOWMEN HAD PICKED UP ROCKET BURPING BY NOW



burp!

THAT'S IT! FEEL THE CHI FLOW THROUGH YOU!

KRALTAW WENT INTO HIDING. HE FIGURED THAT THE CHICKEN DIDN'T KNOW FOR CERTAIN HE WAS THERE AND HE COULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THAT FOR A SURPRISE ATTACK.



MEEN

THE ARMY WAS BUILDING WAS THERE TO TAKE ON THE CHICKEN'S ARMY OF BUTT SOLDIERS PLUS ALL THE PEOPLE THE TRINITY BRAIN WASHED

I D'ORIGINALLY THOUGHT IT COULD TAKE ON THE CHICKEN AS WELL, BUT THE SNOW DEMONS SHOWING ME HOW TO SUMMON ZINCORCAL TOLD ME THAT THEY THOUGHT IT WOULDN'T BE ENOUGH, AND I WANTED TO MAKE SURE WE WOON!

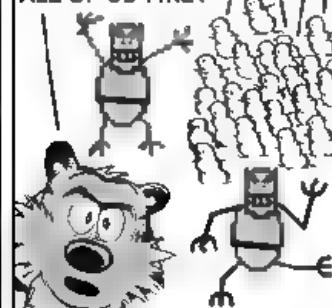
I WASN'T OVERCONFIDENT, UNLIKE DAD THE OVERPOWERED SOLDIER WHOM WE'D BE GOING UP AGAINST AS A TEST WHEN HAD HE SWITCHED SIDES, OR CLAIMED TO HAVE?

I SUPPOSED WE'D FIND OUT SOON ENOUGH BECAUSE THERE HE WAS!

THERE YOU ARE, CALVIN! AND THAT HUSSY YOU'VE ASSOCIATED YOURSELF WITH IMMORTALITY AWAITS ME!



YOU'LL HAVE TO GET THROUGH all of us! ALL OF US FIRST!



SUPER HOBBE'S LED THE WAY

THE SHIPS DIDN'T RESPOND IN WORDS, BUT IN FIREPOWER



MEEN



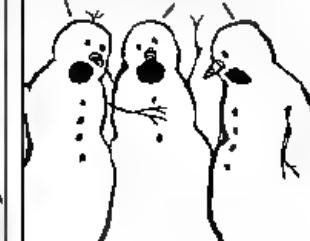
BLAM POW BLOOIE BAM ZING BANG

HAH!

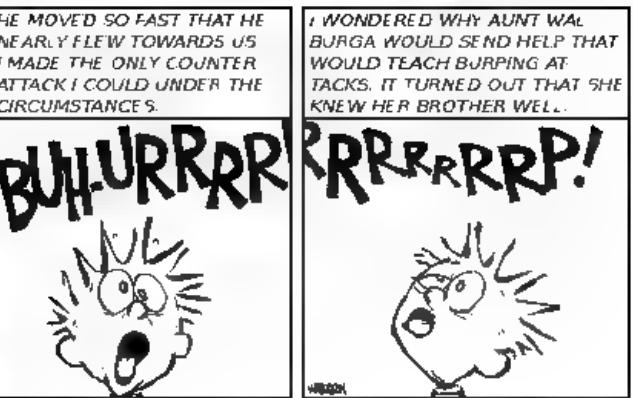
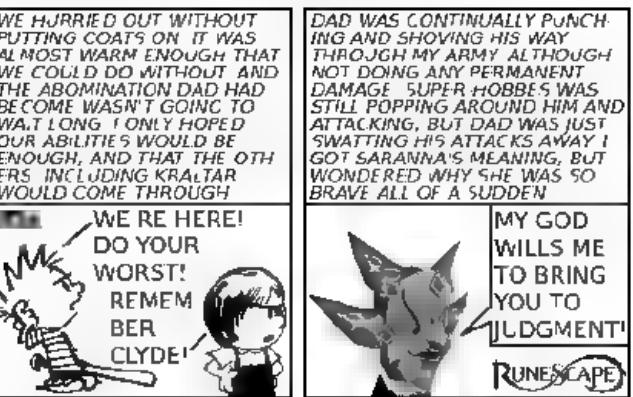
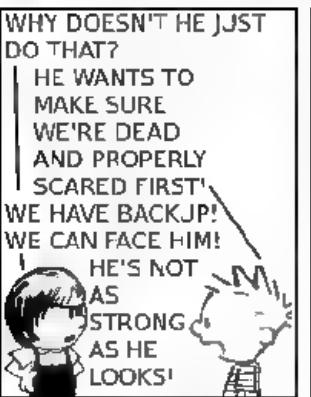
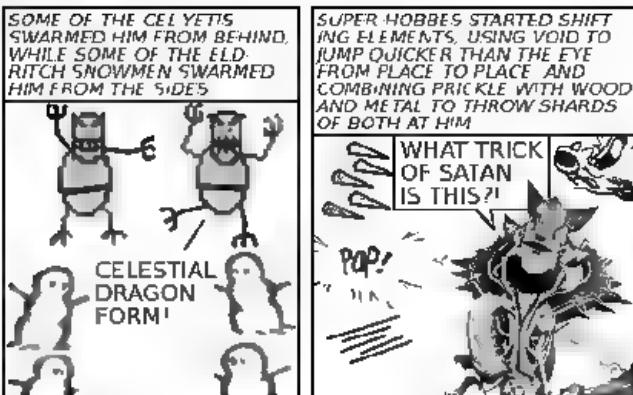
HIS TRANSFORMATION HAD APPARENTLY MADE HIM BULLETPROOF. AT LEAST WE HAD PLENTY OF OTHER OPTIONS

we have achieved proper posture! attack!

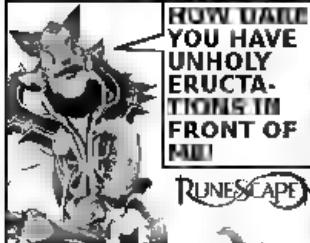
forward



SPROUTING!



SARANNA AND THE NEAREST INTACT ELDritch SNOWMEN JOINED IN. DAD WAS SUDDENLY BLOWN BACKWARDS. HE ALREADY SEE MED ODDLY EN RAGED AT NOT BEING ABLE TO MOVE FAST ENOUGH TOWARD US. BUT THIS MADE IT WORSE



WHAT ARE ERUCTIONS?
LOOK IT UP IN THE DICTIONARY!



SARANNA SMILED KNOWINGLY, AND THEN WE ALL HEARD THE CHICKEN SCREAM FROM DAD'S HEAD.

COMMANDMENT 4975:
THOU SHALT NOT
REFER TO BURPS AS
ERUCTIONS, FOR IT
SOUNDS TOO MUCH
LIKE 'ERFCTIONS'



THE CONVERSATION FROM DAD'S END CONTINUED OUT LOUD FOR A BIT BEFORE HE GOT HIMSELF ENOUGH UNDER CONTROL TO GO BACK TO THINKING HIS ANSWERS

WHAT ARE YOU DOING? I AM THE SUPERIOR ONE. NOT YOU FINISH THE JOB OR I'LL HURT YOU MORE!

YES, LORD. I WAS TREATING THEM AS ONE SHOULD TREAT UNDERLINGS PER YOUR EXAMPLE

BUT SINCE I WAS THE ONE WHO SUGGESTED ARPHAXAD TAKE ON THIS MISION, MY EX LOVE WILL PUNISH ME! THE ONLY QUESTION IS, WILL HE PUNISH ME MORE IF HE FINDS OUT ABOUT IT...



STOP FOLLOWING MY EXAMPLE AND OBEY MY ORDERS! YOU'RE DRAINING ME WITH SO MUCH HEALING, PLUS THE ILLUSIONS! I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH POWER TO GIVE YOU LIGHT-SPEED RIGTH NOW WITHOUT COMPROMISING SOMETHING ELSE!



YES, LORD!



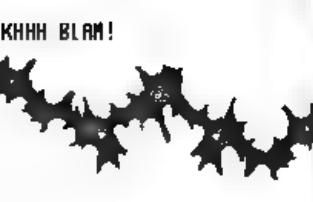
YOU, MY ILL GOTTEN SON ARE PUTTING EVIL THOUGHTS IN MY HEAD WITH YOUR ELDritch POWER!



I HAD NO IDEA WHAT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT, BUT BLAMING EVERYONE BUT HIMSELF FOR HIS OWN FLAWS WAS PAR FOR THE COURSE WITH HIM.

I CAN HEAR YOU THINK IT AS WELL AS SAY IT! BUT I KNOW WHAT A CONTROLLED OR POSSESSED MIND FEELS LIKE, AND YOU HAVE NEITHER! SAVE YOUR LIES FOR MY EX LOVE!

DAD SEEMED TO HESITATE FOR A BIT AS THOUGH HE WAS MENTALLY ARGUING WITH SOMEONE AT THAT POINT, KRA'TAR SAW HIS OPENING AND FIRED



ZARTOK 3...
PORTAL DETECTED! GUARD IT SO HE CAN'T ESCAPE LS.NG IT!
WHAT PORTAL?!

EEHHHH!
AFTER ALL THE PEOPLE YOU KILLED ON THE WAY HERE, YOU TRY TO BLAME IT ON HIM, WHOM YOU'RE CLEARLY TRYING TO KILL!?



EARTH
("MY LORD I ANTICIPATED THESE ATTACKS AND GAVE HIM THE SHIELD TO PROVIDE SOME PROTECTION FROM THEM. IT'S NOT PERFECT, BUT ONLY THINGS EXCLUSIVELY MADE BY YOU ARE PERFECT!")
GOOD THINKING! CARRY ON!

* TRANSLATED FROM FARTS

BAH! ONLY A MOMENT OF PAIN!
YOU LIED ABOUT WHICH GOD YOU SERVE. THAT'S FRAUD ON TOP OF EVERYTHING ELSE YOU'VE DONE! SJREN DER BEFORE WE RESUME F.R.NG.

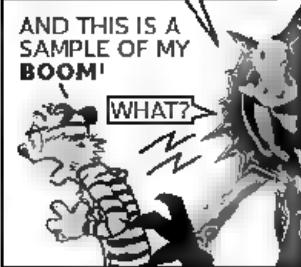
DAD KEPT PAUSING FOR SPLIT SECONDS AS THOUGH HE WAS HAVING MORE MENTAL CONVERSATIONS. ASIDE FROM THE CHICKEN'S SCREAMING TO EVERYONE WITHIN RANGE WHEN HE BROKE ONE OF THE COMMANDMENTS, HOWEVER NO ONE COULD HEAR ANY OF THOSE CONVERSATIONS. SUPER HOBBS TOOK ADVANTAGE OF IT, AND LEAPED AT DAD AGAIN



BUT THIS TIME, DAD WAS BETTER PREPARED. FLYING OUT OF EVERYONE'S IMMEDIATE REACH THEN SWOOPING DOWN TO GRAB SUPER HOBBS FROM THE GROUND



NOW, DEMON TIGER, THIS IS A SAMPLE OF THE PAN MY ANTI DEMONIC ARMOR CAN INFILIT!



SUPER HOBBS HAD LET HIMSELF BE GRABBED BECAUSE FLYING UNDER HIS OWN POWER WITH AIR BEING IN METAL FORM, AND USING BOOM TO BLOW HIMSELF UP INTO METAL SHRAPNEL WOULD REQUIRE USING THREE ELEMENTS AT ONCE AS FAST AS HE COULD SWITCH BETWEEN ELEMENTS. HE COULD ONLY USE TWO AT ONCE



GRRR! NOW I HAVE TO PULL ALL YOUR ARMOR'S POWER TO HEAL UP YOUR NEW DAMAGE! I'M RUNNING OUT OF VIABLE OPTIONS!



ALL YOU HAVE LEFT ARE YOUR INTRINSIC POWERS OF FLIGHT, BEING ABLE TO BREATHE IN SPACE, FEAR INDUCTION, AND SUPER STRENGTH! USE THEM WELL!



SUPER HOBBS NEEDED A BIT TO REASSEMBLE HIMSELF. INCREDIBLY, DAD APPEARED TO BE UNAFFECTED, ASIDE FROM BECOMING EVEN MORE ENRAGED. AFTER ANOTHER SPLIT SECOND HESITATION, HE SWOOPED DOWN DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF SARANNA AND ME STILL PUNCHING AWAY THE CEL YETIS AND ELDritch SNOWMEN WHO TRIED TO SHIELD US. SEVERAL SNOWMEN HAD BEEN REDUCED TO UNRESPONSIVE PILES OF SNOW, AND SOME CEL YETIS WERE NURSING MAJOR INJURIES, BUT THEY STILL FOUGHT

HE WAS USUALLY BEYOND REASON WHEN HE WAS LIKE THIS, BUT NOT PREDICTABLY SO. I TOOK A SHOT AT IT (SARANNA'S AND MY BURPING ATTACKS, UNLIKE NORMAL BURPS, NEEDED RECHARGE TIME AS WELL)

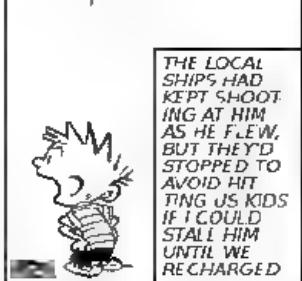
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS, SINCE YOU TALK ABOUT CHOICE SO MUCH? THIS IS COERCION!



IT'S NOT COERCION, IT'S THE CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR ACTIONS! NOW LOSE THE ATTITUDE!



IT'S NOT AN "ATTITUDE," IT'S A "FACT!"



YOL'D BETTER SHUT UP, OR WE'RE GONNA PLAY EXORCIST BABY AND I'M GONNA SPIN YOUR HEAD AROUND!



THERE IT WAS. THE REAL DAD. READY TO INFILCT HIS REAL "CONSEQUENCES OF FREEDOM OF SPEECH" ON ANYONE WHO SAID ANYTHING HE DIDN'T LIKE

HE'D NEVER DROPPED THE MASK OF RESPECTABILITY IN PUBLIC AROUND NON-FAMILY BEFORE, BUT HE'D NEVER BEEN TURNED INTO A SUPERPOWERED POWER DRUNK ABOMINATION BEFORE.

FOR THE MILLIONTH TIME, I WONDERED, IF ACTING LIKE THIS REALLY MADE HIM A PATRIOT, AS HE CLAIMED, WHY DID HE GO SO FAR OUT OF HIS WAY TO HIDE IT?

HE GRABBED AHOLD OF ME AND STARED AT ME WITH HIS NOW-MISSING EYES



THE SNOWMEN AND CEL YETIS POUNDED HIM WITH THEIR LIMBS AND, IN SOME CASES, THEIR SKI POLES, BUT IT WAS TO NO AVAIL. HE WAS IN MY HEAD



SO EASILY FROZEN WITH FEAR! YOU'RE WEAK JUST LIKE YOUR MOTHER, EH RHONDA JUNIOR?



COMMANDMENT 82209: THOU SHALT ONLY USE "JUNIOR" WITH MALE NAMES, NEVER WITH FEMALE NAMES!



I MUST SHOW THAT I'M MORE OF A MAN THAN MY SON IS!



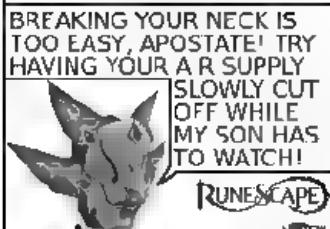
STOP SHOWING OFF, FILL BOTH OF THEM WITH FEAR, AND THEN KILL THEM! DO NOTHING ELSE, OR FACE MY WRATH!



I WAS IN THE MENTAL EQUIVALENT OF QUICKSAND FOR ALL OF HIS TALK ABOUT FEAR. I'D BEEN ABLE TO FIGHT IT OFF MANY TIMES BEFORE (OTHERWISE HE WOULD HAVE BROKEN ME YEARS AGO AND NEVER HAD TO THROW ME IN THE DUNGEON). BUT THIS LEVEL OF IT WAS NEW

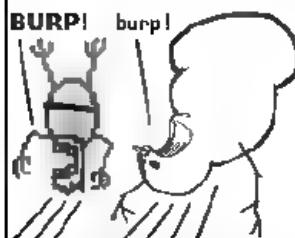
THE CEL YETIS AND SNOWMEN KEPT FIGHTING AS THEY SERVED MY CAUSE OF THEIR OWN FREE WILL, BUT DAD. AFTER GETTING SCREAMED AT BY THE CHICKEN AGAIN, FLEW TOWARD SARANNA THIS TIME

SUPER HOBBS HAD JUST FINISHED PUTTING HIMSELF BACK TOGETHER, BUT HE WAS TOO LATE TO STOP DAD FROM GRABBING SARANNA, FLYING TOWARD THE STRATOSPHERE, AND PUNCHING ONE OF THE LOCAL SHIPS OUT OF THE WAY

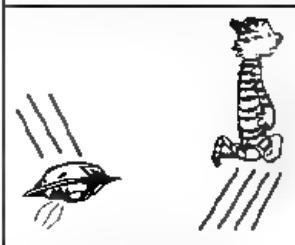


THE NEAREST MEMBERS OF MY ARMY STARTED ROCKET BURPING AFTER DAD AND SARANNA, IN HOT PURSUIT

Chris Pirillo **RUNESCAPE**



SUPER HOBBS USED HIS AIR AND VOID POWERS TO FLY TOWARD THEM, TELEPORTING CLOSER AND CLOSER WHILE THE CRAFT DAD HAD HIT MADE AN EMERGENCY LANDING AS IT WAS APPARENTLY FATALY DAMAGED



SARANNA WAS MENTALLY FOCUSING ON A DEATH MEDITATION THE GOBLINS HAD TAUGHT HER WHILE REVIEWING THE HAPPIEST OF SUSIE'S MEMORIES THAT SHE'D ABSORBED. DAD WAS INFURIATED THAT SHE WASN'T AS SCARED AS HE WANTED



I WAS TRYING TO REGAIN THE MOTIVATION TO MOVE PEOPLE NEEDED MY HELP! AND DAD HAD A LOT OF NERVE COMPLAINING ABOUT LACK OF FEAR!

*YOU WANT TO CALL CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES? A FOSTER FAMILY WON'T LET YOU HAVE ALL THESE NICE THINGS! GO AHEAD, I'LL HELP YOU DIAL 1! THAT WAS THE SPIEL HE USED TO KEEP ME COMPLIANT, NEVER REALIZING THAT I COULD EVENTUALLY USE THE SAME SPIEL WHEN HE WAS NONCOMPLIANT AND AT NURSING HOME AGE, CONFIDENT TO THE POINT OF STUPIDITY, AS USUAL

I TWITCHED A LITTLE MORE. MY MOTIVATION WAS COMING BACK. NOW I NEEDED THE MOTIVATION TO HELP BOTH MYSELF AND SARANNA AGAINST DAD

THE ONLY MUNDANE ATTACK I COULD THINK OF THAT SARANNA COULD USE WAS FOR HER TO HIT HIM IN EXACTLY THE RIGHT SPOT OF HIS LOWER BACK AT AN UPWARD ANGLE. IT'D HURT HIM EVERY TIME HE'D MOVE FOR A WEEK AFTERWARDS AND WOULDN'T LEAVE A MARK. SHE WOULDN'T NEED MUCH STRENGTH TO DO IT; MOM CERTAINLY HADN'T WHEN SHE'D DONE IT TO ME A FEW YEARS BEFORE, AND IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN AN ACCIDENT THEN

NO, THAT WOULD ONLY WORK IF DAD WERE STILL IN HUMAN FORM. WHO KNOWS WHAT THE WEAKNESSES OF HIS CURRENT FORM WERE? BETTER TO AIM FOR HIS MASTERS THE CHICKEN, UNLESS HE ACTUALLY WAS A SECRET CHRISTIAN BETRAYING THE CHICKEN. GIVEN HIS OPPORTUNISM, HE JUST MIGHT BE



...BUT I'M NOT. I HAVE FULL MOVEMENT BACK NOW, EVEN IF IT'LL TAKE LONGER TO FULLY RECOVER. PRAISE WHICHEVER POWERS MAY HAVE HAD A HAND IN HELPING ME! ER'S OR AMITABA, OR LIRANLOBOL! WAIT, WHO'S THAT LAST GOD, AND WHY DID THEIR NAME POP INTO MY MIND? I'LL LOOK THEM UP SOON ENOUGH!

ALL OF THE ROCKET BURPERS CHASING DAD HIGHER AND HIGHER SUDDENLY CAME TO A STOP, HOLDING THEIR POSITION IN MID-AIR WITH GREAT DIAPHRAGM CONTROL. DAD TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO GLOAT



RUNESCAPE AND WHEN WE DO SO, MY PATH TO THE CHICKEN'S HEAVEN IS OPEN N!

THIS WHOLE REALITY IS HEAVEN FOR CHICKENISTS. WHY DOES HE NEED A SEPARATE ONE, TOO?



THERE MUST ALWAYS BE THOSE MORE FAVORED THAN OTHERS! THEY GET TO GO TO SUPER-HEAVEN AND LOOK DOWN ON THOSE IN ORDINARY HEAVEN AS PART OF THEIR REWARD! TOO OBVIOUS, UNBELIEVER!



PREPOSTEROUS! THERE IS ONLY ONE SUPER-HEAVEN, RESERVED FOR THOSE WHO BEST FOLLOW THE HOLY LUMBER CHICKEN! AND THE TRINITY, TO ACCOUNT FOR OUR CHRISTO CHICKENIST CULTURAL HERITAGE!



GRRR! COMMANDMENT 102551: THOU SHALT NOT SPECULATE ABOUT SUPER-HEAVEN OR SUPER-SUPER-HEAVEN, FOR THOSE ARE MINE ALONE!



I WONDERED WHETHER DAD KNEW ABOUT THE SKY BARRIER THAT THE NEWS REPORT HAD MENTIONED ONE SECOND AFTER THE CHICKEN SCREAMED AGAIN, I HAD MY ANSWER NO

CLANG! FZZZZ!



THE BLOW THEY BOTH TOOK FROM THE BARRIER WAS ENOUGH TO MAKE DAD LOSE HIS GRIP ON SARANNA, BUT SUPER HOBBS REACHED HER BEFORE TERMINAL VELOCITY



THE ARGUMENT BETWEEN DAD AND THE CHICKEN WAS OUT LOUD FOR ALL TO HEAR AS DAD FELL FROM THE SKY

NO ONE KNOWS ABOUT SUPER-SUPER-HEAVEN! IT'S ONE OF MY BEST KEPT SECRETS, AND YOU AND THE GIRL BLEW IT! THEN WHY DO YOU WANT TO PUNISH ME, WHEN NEITHER OF US KNEW? IT'S NOT FAIR! I'M REVOKING YOUR POWER AND LETTING YOU FALL TO YOUR DEATH! NOW THAT'S NOT FAIR! WHAT?!

HEH, IF I SAID "IT'S NOT FAIR" TO DAD, HE'D RESPOND LIKE THAT TO ME. TOO LACK OF FAIRNESS WAS ALWAYS HIS THING, AND IT WAS NOW HIS UNDOING

NO, I THINK I'LL LET YOU LIVE JUST LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO CRACK OPEN YOUR MIND-SHIELD AND SEE WHAT IT'S HIDING. IN THAT CASE, THE TRINITY WILL RISE AGAIN! ...AND NOW I'VE TAKEN YOUR VOICE, BUTT-JESUS FFWMET-CHEWING BUTT-CHRIST, I'M SICK OF YOUR EGOISTIC BLABBERING! I AM THE ONLY ONE WHO MATTERS!



I LOOKED AWAY. I HAD NO IDEA ABOUT DAD'S HAVING A MIND SHIELD, BUT I FIGURED IT WAS A SIGN THAT HE'D EITHER TURNED TRAITOR OR HAD ALWAYS BEEN ONE TO THE CHICKEN

THE BATTLE WAS FINALLY OVER. THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES QUESTIONED US ABOUT WHAT WE KNEW KRA-TAR HANDLED MOST OF IT SINCE HE'D APPARENTLY BEEN THROUGH SOMETHING LIKE IT BEFORE. SARANNA WAS IN SHOCK; SHE WAS IN SHOCK AND STILL SUFFERING MENTAL EFFECTS FROM DAD'S ATTEMPTED "ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT," AND SUPER HOBBS TOOK IT ALL IN STRIDE SOMEHOW

DAD WAS TAKEN TO A HOSPITAL, AND THEY TRIED TO INTERROGATE HIM THERE, BUT THE CHICKEN HADN'T JUST REMOVED HIS VOICE; HE'D REMOVED ALL THE WAYS HIS FORMER SERVANT COULD COMMUNICATE. DAD ALSO KEPT LIVING, DESPITE FATAL INJURIES. THE CHICKEN WASN'T DONE WITH HIM YET

WHY WERE YOU SO CALM WHEN DAD HAD YOU? I HAD A VISION CLOSE TO IT YEARS AGO.

CLOSE TO IT? SO IT HAD SHADOWS IN THE WAY OF IT, LIKE YOUR VISION OF THE FUTURE WAR AGAINST THE CHICKEN?

YES, I SAW A MONSTER ON AN ALIEN WORLD TRY TO KILL ME IN THE SKY. IT WASN'T CLEAR UNTIL YOUR DAD GOT HERE

MY MIND IS STILL TOO FUZZY TO DO ANY MORE SUMMONING RIGHT NOW, BUT I'M FEELING A LOT BETTER! THAT INTERROGATION WAS SOMETHING ELSE! THE CHICKEN WOULD REALLY BE OFFENDED IF HE KNEW THAT CLYDE'S ORIGINAL NAME WAS CLIVE, AND HE CHANGED IT IN HONOR OF THE PAC MAN GHOST!

MURK

ALSO IF HE KNEW ABOUT ALL THE OTHER POWERS OTHER THAN HIM AROUND HERE! "ST GITAIVELL'S TENTACLES!" INDEED! I SHOULD HAVE GUessed THEY'D HAVE A SAINT OF DEEP, TANGLED PROBLEMS! AND YOUR ENCOUNTER WITH LIRANLOBOL, GOD OF RED HERRINGS!



ALTHOUGH I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT HIS SISTER KLEVARXIA, GODDESS OF CHARTREUSE HERRINGS, IS REALLY ABOUT! I'M MORE CONCERNED ABOUT WHO YOUR DAD'S REALLY WORKING FOR!

.. YEAH, SAME HERE!



EARTH: WHY WON'T THE MIND-SHIELD BREAK? I'VE BEEN POUNDING AGAINST IT FOR DAYS NOW! I MUST BE TOO LOW ON POWER! IT'LL TAKE ME SO LONG TO REABSORB ALL THAT POWER I GAVE ARPHAXAD! AND THE BUTT-VICEROY MADE THE SHIELD SO POWERFUL THAT HE CAN'T BREAK IT, EITHER!

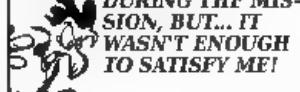


WHAT IS GOING ON?!

ARPHAXAD MAY HAVE TRIED TO BLAME THE BUTT-VICEROY FOR THIS, BUT IT COULDN'T POSSIBLY BE MY LOVE! MY SO-CALLED SERVANT WAS ONLY TRYING TO GET ME TO TARGET SOMEONE OTHER THAN HIM! I'M NOT FALLING FOR IT! ALTHOUGH MY BELOVED BUTT-VICEROY DOES NEED PUNISHMENT FOR SUGGESTING I SEND ARPHAXAD ON THE MISSION!

MURK

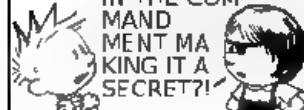
HE GETS A REPRIEVE UNTIL TOMORROW. IF I HAVEN'T CRACKED THE MIND-SHIELD BY THEN, I'LL PUNISH HIM MORE! BESESIDES, IMPENDING PUNISHMENT MAKES HIM SHOW THE KIND OF DELICIOUS FEAR THAT I WANTED FROM THE ONES ARPHAXAD WAS SUPPOSED TO KILL! MY BELOVED BUTT-WUTTY SHOWED IT DURING THE MISSION, BUT... IT WASN'T ENOUGH TO SATISFY ME!



ZARTOK 3...

...AND YOU DIDN'T ACTUALLY KNOW ABOUT SUPER SUPER HEAVEN?

NO, I WAS JUST GUESSING! WHAT KIND OF SECRET IS IT IF IT'S MEN TONED BY NAME IN THE COMMANDMENT MAKING IT A SECRET?!



BACK AMONG THE GHOSTS

I HAVE FINALLY RECEIVED ANOTHER MESSAGE FROM CALVIN, ALTHOUGH THE SIGNAL IS.. UNCLEAR. YOUR BROTHER CAN NOW ADD, AMONG OTHER THINGS, ATTEMPTED BRAINWASHING AND ATTEMPTED INFANTICIDE TO HIS MANY CRIMES.



REALLY?

ALSO, I NOW KNOW WHAT ONE OF THOSE REDACTED COMMANDMENTS IS.

I FOUND THE SECTION OF THE LIBRARY WE NEED! WAIT, WHAT'D I MISS? YOUR SISTER AND MY NEPHEW ARE RECOVERING FROM MY BROTHER'S NEW EXPLOITS!

MURK

AT LEAST HE SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DO ANYTHING ELSE TO THEM! AND WE NEED TO CONTACT WHOEVER KEEPS TRACK OF THE COMMANDMENTS THAT ONE OF THE SECRET ONES ISN'T ANYMORE! JUST IN CASE THAT CAN HELP!



YOUR SISTER WAS THE ONE WHO UNCOVERED IT, AND DID SO BY ACCIDENT. THE CHICKEN'S TRYING TO KEEP SUCH THINGS SECRET AT LEAST WORKED IN OUR FAVOR BY TURNING HIM AGAINST HIS WOULD-BE SERVANT BEFORE HE COULD DO MORE HARM.



IT'S LIKE IF YOU TRIED TO TELL ME THAT YOUR NATIVE LANGUAGE IS OFFICIALLY CALLED STRTOULL 36 INSTEAD OF ROBOT SPEAK!

PRECISELY, SINCE MY EMERGENCY BOOT-UP MODE DIRECTLY SAYS SO, EVEN THOUGH YOU LEARNED IT THE HARD WAY.

I WOULDN'T CALL IT 'THE HARD WAY'!

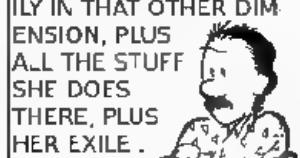


GETTING TO KNOW YOU WELL ENOUGH TO CALL YOU MY FRIEND, AND EVENTUALLY FAMILY ALONG WITH SUSE (SINCE HER PARENTS SEEM TO HAVE ABANDONED HER) ISN'T EASY BUT IT IS WORTH IT!

I SUPPOSE, AND THANK YOU!



THE ONLY BLOOD RELATIVES AMONG THE LIVING WHOM I'D CONSIDER FAMILY ARE CALVIN AND WALBURGA, AND WALBURGA ONLY RARELY SITS BECAUSE SHE HAS HER ADOPTED FAMILY IN THAT OTHER DIMENSION, PLUS ALL THE STUFF SHE DOES THERE, PLUS HER EXILE.



FROM WHAT CALVIN'S MESSAGE SAID, YOUR BROTHER IS TECHNICALLY STILL AMONG THE LIVING, BUT WILL NOT BE SO FOR MUCH LONGER, AND SUSIE'S PARENTS ARE TECHNICALLY WILD CARDS, SINCE THEY ARE NOT DEAD YET.



THEY HAVEN'T EVER RESPONDED WHEN THE BARRIER NATURALLY WEAKENS AND TRY TO VISIT THEM AND THEY ABANDONED MY SISTER TO A COUSIN MUCH LIKE YOUR BROTHER LONG BEFORE THAT I'D CALL IT A "NO" THANKS FOR CALLING ME FAMILY! HOW ABOUT WE GO CRACK THOSE BOOKS?



GOOD, THEY HAVE THAT BOOK ON MEDIEVAL ENGLISH! PRAISE RAZZENFRATTEN, SINCE ALL BLASPHEMY IS PROFANITY TO THE RIGHT GOD!



BUT ISN'T IT ARBITRARY? I REMEMBER READING A COMIC BOOK THAT SAID ANY WORD CAN BE DEROGATORY IF YOU SAY IT THE RIGHT WAY, LIKE "PEPPERONI," AND THEN THE CHICKEN TOOK IT SERIOUSLY AND BANNED US USING IT AS A SWEAR WORD!



COMMANDMENT 74357, YES, ANOTHER ABOMINATION TO THE CHICKEN, MUCH LIKE COMMANDMENT 74 AGAINST "QUASAR." SUCH THINGS ARE INDEED ARBITRARY, BEING SUBJECT TO HIS WHIMS OR INSPIRED BY THE TRINITY'S WHIMS.

AND MY BROTHER WOULD SAY IT WASN'T ARBITRARY BECAUSE HIS GOD ORDERED IT!



WHICH MAKES NO SENSE, AND HE IS NOW STUCK IN DEATH BECAUSE OF ONE OF HIS GOD'S ORDERS.

SO IF I CALLED THE LUMBERCHICKEN A "KAFLARPITY ZARPITY" IN A DEROGATORY ENOUGH WAY, THAT COULD BE BLASPHEMY TOO?

IT IS A POSSIBILITY!



SINCE THE LUMBERCHICKEN'S ATTEMPT TO BREAK THE PROPHECY FAILED, ACCORDING TO CALVIN, THE FINAL BATTLE IS COMING UP, AND MORE WAYS TO BLASPHEMIE WILL HELP US!



AFTER SOME RESEARCH

OKAY, SO AN EASY ONE IS "THE DEMIURGE IS A PILFERED PINTLED SPOOR SARDER!"
"PILFERED" IS STOLEN, "SPOOR" IS POOP, WHICH SARANNA LEARNED AGAINST HER WIL, AND SARD.



IS A KIND OF MINERAL? BUT YOU'RE USING IT AS A VERB!

UH THE CHICKEN LOVES POOP, BUT HE GETS INSULTED BEYOND BELIEF IF YOU SAY SO THE WRONG WAY!



AH! IN MODERN LAYMAN'S TERMS, THE STATEMENT IS: "3880643764856541642-3724896710296296740-1893127025807309907" ALTHOUGH IT SOUNDS MORE POETIC YOUR WAY!

I CAN'T WAIT TILL I'M OLD ENOUGH TO LEARN THE WHOLE TRUTH AND FINALLY LEARN YOUR LANGUAGE!



I'VE NEVER HEARD OF ANYONE TAKING THE TROUBLE TO MAKE WEIRD ALLITERATIVE BLASPHEMY BEFORE!

WE NEED AS MANY OPTIONS AS WE CAN GET TO TAKE DOWN A GOD!



I WILL INFORM CALVIN OF OUR BURGEONING RESEARCH... HE SAYS HE HAS ALSO READ THAT X-MEN COMIC ABOUT PEPPERONI, AND WONDERS IF MENTIONING NON-CHICKENIST HOLIDAYS CAN ALSO BE CONSIDERED BLASPHEMOS. I BELIEVE SO... HE SAYS HE CAN THINK OF A FEW DISCORDIAN ONES LIKE SYADAY, COMIC-BASED ONES LIKE KLORDY FROM THE LEGION OF SUPERHEROES, AND MUSIC-BASED ONES LIKE OUT OF TOUCH THURSDAY. HE WILL ASK AROUND FOR



HE IS ALSO SURPRISED THAT HE NEVER KNEW OF THE CHICKEN'S TURNING PEPPERONI INTO A FORBIDDEN SWEAR WORD, BUT ATTRIBUTES THAT TO HIS NOT WANTING TO DEFAME PIZZA TOPPINGS THAT WAY. NOT EVEN BLACK OLIVES, WHICH HE DISLIKES.

HUH! I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!



I'M ALSO SURPRISED THAT THE CHICKEN DOESN'T HAVE A COMMANDMENT AGAINST DEFAMING PIZZA TOPPINGS THAT HE ACTUALLY LIKES, GIVEN HOW MANY COMMANDMENTS HE HAS REGARDING FOOD! BUT LET'S GET BACK TO RESEARCH!



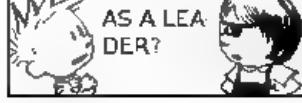
ZARTOK 3

I JUST HAD A TALK WITH BRIAN! HE AND THE OTHERS THINK THE FINAL BATTLE IS NEAR, AND THEY'RE LOOKING FOR NEW WAYS TO BLASPHEMIE! I'LL HELP THEM SOON ENOUGH, BUT I'M WORRIED ABOUT THE ARMY!



YOU SAID SOME SNOW MEN D ED, AND SOME CEL YETIS WERE INJURED BECAUSE THEY'RE MADE OF STRONGER STUFF, R GHT?

RIGHT! I KNEW THERE'D BE CASUALTIES, BUT DID I DO WELL ENOUGH AS A LEADER?



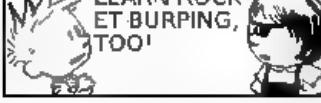
THE BAT WASN'T USEFUL AT ALL! I JUST FROZE, AND DAD GOT TAKEN OUT BY LUCK AND HIS OWN ARROGANCE!

THE ONLY WEAPON I COULD HAVE GRABBED WAS A FRYING PAN FROM THE KITCHEN, AND I GOT HELD CAPTIVE!



IF WE'RE GOING TO FIGHT EVIL POWERS, WE'LL NEED MORE THAN JUST A BASE BALL BAT AND A FRYING PAN! THAT'S WHAT THE BURPING POWERS HELPED WITH! MAYBE, I DON'T KNOW, PSYCHOKINETIC POWERS WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE USEFUL, BUT WE USED WHAT WE HAD!

MAYBE WE CAN LEARN ROCK ET BURPING, TOO!



WE DID BOTH LEARN IT EVEN TOTALLY BUT AT THE TIME, WE JUST WENT ON REASSURING EACH OTHER

BESIDES, THE BURPING POWERS REQUIRE BOTH CHI AND ELDritch POWER, AND CHI ONLY FLOWS THROUGH LIVING THINGS, SO ONLY MAGICAL LIVING WEAPONS COULD BURP ATTACK WHEN THEY HIT!

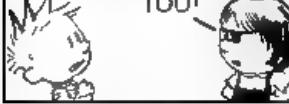


R GHT! AND I MAY HAVE BEEN PREPARED FOR THIS ONE BRUSH WITH DEATH, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I'LL BE PREPARED FOR THE NEXT ONE! WHO KNOWS WHAT THE CHICKEN GOD WILL DO IN OPEN WAR?



I'LL GO RALLY THE TROOPS AS BEST I CAN, THEN! SEBASTIAN, CLYDE, AND TUNDRA TIBERIUS THE SNOWMAN DEFINITELY NEED COMMENDATIONS AS WELL AS

I'LL LEAVE YOU TO IT SUPER HOBSES WILL BE BACKING YOU UP, TOO!



KRALTAZ WAS STILL DEALING WITH THE LOCAL BUREAUCRACY. ZARTOK 3 HAD MAINTAINED NEUTRALITY BY PAYING EXTRA TRIBUTES TO THE CHICKEN, BUT HIS SENDING AN AGENT WHO IGNORED THAT SHOOK THE NATIVES DEEPLY ALSO. THEY HADN'T KNOWN A PROPHECY TO TAKE DOWN THE CHICKEN WAS INVOLVED. BECAUSE KRALTAZ HAD CONSIDERED THAT TO BE ON A NEED-TO-KNOW BASIS. NOT ANY MORE THE WAR AGAINST THE CHICKEN HELD IN THE BALANCE AND DAD WAS STILL STUCK IN HIS FROZEN STATE AT THE CHICKEN'S MOSTLY MISSING MERCY

EARTH

I'VE FINALLY CRACKED THE MIND-SHIELD, IF ONLY PARTIALLY! BUT ARPHAXAD MUST BE OUT OF HIS MIND! HE THINKS HE CAN KILL ME WITH POWERS DRAWN FROM ME! AND HE WANTS TO KILL THE BUTT-VICEROY WITH THEM AS WELL! LIKE I WOULDN'T PULL THEM THE INSTANT HE TRIED ANYTHING! AND WHY WOULD HE KILL THE BUTT-VICEROY, WHO IS INFERIOR TO ME?

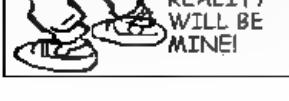


NO MORE SPECULATION! THE BUTT-VICEROY HAD A SEVERE LAPSE IN JUDGMENT PICKING HIM, BUT NO WORSE THAN THAT! STILL, SUCH A LAPSE REQUIRES A SPECIAL KIND OF PAIN! HE WANDERED OFF TO DO SOME ERAND WHILE I WAS MORE FOCUSED ON THE BATTLE, BUT HE SHOULD BE EASY TO TRACK DOWN! IT'S NOT LIKE ANYONE LEARNED ABOUT SUPER-SUPER-HEAVEN! THEN I'D HAVE TO STOP HOLDING BACK ENTIRELY!

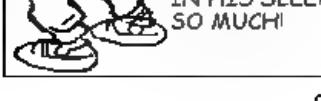


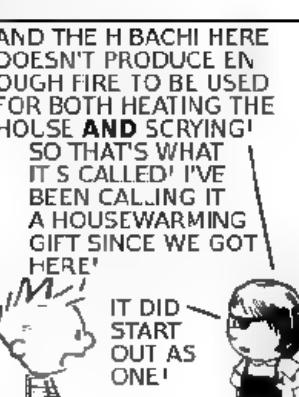
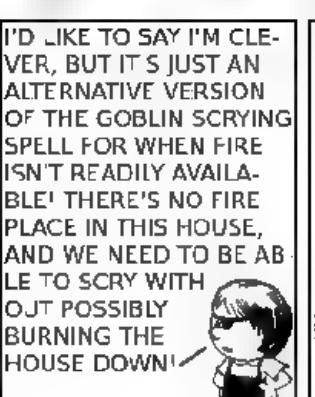
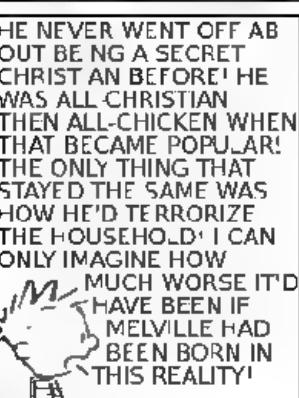
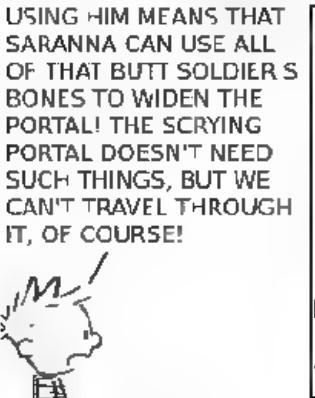
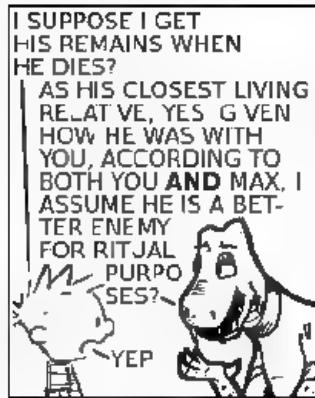
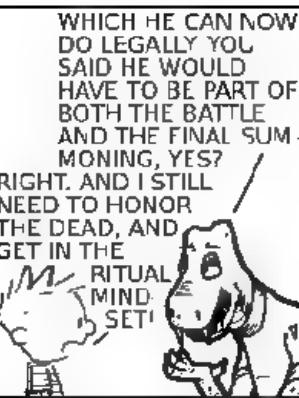
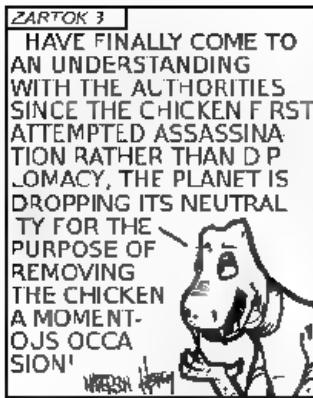
IN A HIDDEN LOCATION ON EARTH.

GATHER, MY ARMY, FOR VIC TORY IS AT HAND! EVEN WITHOUT ARPHAXAD, SUPER SUPER SUPER HEAVEN AND THIS REALITY WILL BE MINE!



WE ONLY HAVE TO PRETEND FOR A LITTLE WHILE LONGER AND IF HE DIDN'T WANT ME TO BREAK COMMANDMENT 155201, HE SHOULDN'T HAVE TALKED IN HIS SLEEP SO MUCH!





GIVEN DAD'S PARTIAL RECOVERY, WE HEADED TO THE HOSPITAL. GETTING THERE JUST IN TIME FOR HIM TO GET HIS REWARD FROM THE CHICKEN

HIS BODY JUST DISINTEGRATED, LEAVING NOTHING BUT A SKULL THAT'S SOMEHOW STILL ABLE TO TALK! IT'S A DIVINE PUNISHMENT HE IS NOW A "SKULLCIDE," BEYOND ALL HELP.

EARTH ("I'M STILL WEAK SOMETIMES! AND I CAN SENSE AR PHAXAD IS A SKULLCIDE NOW! MY EX LOVE PROBABLY KNOWS EVERYTHING AT THIS POINT! EVEN IF NOT, WE WILL FIGHT HIM OPENLY! NO MORE HIDING!")*

* TRANSLATED FROM FARTS.

UNCLE MAX TALKED ABOUT THEM!

DID HE MENTION THAT THEY HAVE A BRIEF PERIOD OF LUCIDITY BEFORE GIVING IN TO DESPAIR?

NO . . .



SUPER HOBBE'S WANTED TO CARVE DAD'S NAME INTO THE SKULL WITH HIS CLAWS SINCE HE THOUGHT HUMAN SKULLS LOOKED TOO MUCH ALIKE, BUT "ARPHAXAD" WAS LONG ENOUGH TO WRAP AROUND THE ENTIRE SKULL, SO HE SETTLED FOR CARVING "DAD" INTO IT

NO ONE EVER LOVED ME, NO MATTER HOW I THREATENED OR BRIBED THEM TO DO SO! I WAS TET MY LIFE! I WANT TO DIE

DAD

KRALTAH HAD TO ARGUE WITH THE AUTHORITIES YET AGAIN THIS TIME ABOUT WHETHER DAD'S PUNISHMENT WAS ENOUGH JUSTICE FOR INJURING AND KILLING SO MANY PEOPLE, NOT COUNTING ALL THE PROPERTY DAMAGE HE DID

THE FACT THAT HE WOULD GO TO HIS ACCOUNT AS PART OF THE SUMMONING I'D SOON DO FIGURED HEAVILY IN THEIR DECISION TO LET US HANDLE IT THAT ALONG WITH THE FACT THAT WE WERE ALL HIS TARGETS AS WELL

WE PREPARED FOR WAR

EARTH ("I'M STILL WEAK SOMETIMES! AND I CAN SENSE AR PHAXAD IS A SKULLCIDE NOW! MY EX LOVE PROBABLY KNOWS EVERYTHING AT THIS POINT! EVEN IF NOT, WE WILL FIGHT HIM OPENLY! NO MORE HIDING!")*

* TRANSLATED FROM FARTS.

("HEAD FOR THE OPEN PLAIN AND OR SO FROM THE DUNGEON! WE WILL MAKE OUR STAND THERE!")*

ONWARD! WE SERVE THE TRINITY!

* TRANSLATED FROM FARTS.

SOON THEREF YOU ARE! AND YOU HAVE ALL THE GOOD SERVANTS WITH YOU? THAT MEANS NOTHING! HERE'S WHAT I OWE YOU FOR DIRECTING ME TOWARDS ARPHAXAD'S PAINT

PAIN LIKE NEVER BEFORE!

EVEN WITH MY NEW POWER LEVEL, I CAN'T RESIST THIS ENTIRELY! ("YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO PICK HIM!")*

DON'T TALK BACK TO ME

* TRANSLATED FROM FARTS

WHAT? I DON'T HAVE THE POWER TO CAUSE MORF PAIN? I NEED MORE! YOU, GOOD SERVANT! TAKE THAT RAZOR YOU'RE HOLDING AND FLAY YOURSELF ALIVE WITH IT WHILE I WATCH!



NO! I SERVE THE TRINITY, NOT YOU!

DEFECTIVE! TRAITOR! APOSTATE! SOME OTHER GOOD SERVANT, TORTURE THIS ONE!

AFTER A FAIRLY LONG INTERVAL OF THE CHICKEN'S BEING TOLD "NO" MORE THAN HE HAD EVER BEEN SINCE HIS ASCENSION TO GODHOOD, SO ARPHAXAD WASN'T OUT OF HIS MIND! THE GREAT CHRISTIAN BACKSTABBING IS AT HAND



BUTT-SERVANTS! HERE TO ME! FLY AS FAST AS YOU CAN! UNLESS YOU'RE GUARDING SECURE LOCATIONS! YOU'RE THE ONLY BUTTS I CAN TRUST! HELP ME PUT DOWN THIS FOUL MUTINY!



WE I'VE HONORED THE DEAD AS BEST I CAN, THE ENTIRE ARMY IS PREPARED, AND EVEN THOUGH I'M NOT IN TELEPATHIC CONTACT WITH THE CELYE-TIS, THEY'VE ASSURED ME THEY CAN HANDLE THINGS!



I'VE MOVED THE SCRIVING PORTAL TO POINT AT EARTH AGAIN, AND THERE'S A STRONG PULL TOWARD ONE LOCATION, WHERE THE CHICKEN GOD THE BUTT CEROY AND ALL THEIR SERVANTS ARE! I GUESS BOTH GODS WANT WITNESSES TO THEIR VICTORY AMONG ALL THE SCRIVERS!

LUCKY FOR US, INDEED I'VE DONE THE SUPPLY RUN TO ENSURE EVERYTHING FOR THE FINAL RITUAL IS AVAILABLE, ESPECIALLY THE CANTA LOUPE! I'VE ALSO MOSTLY SOUNDPROOFED THE RITUAL ROOM, SINCE THE RITUAL REQUIRES PLAYING MUSIC, AND DON'T BE LIEVE WE SHOULD TAKE UNNECESSARY CHANCES



AND THE PORTAL IS AS WIDE AS I COULD MAKE IT! I WENT THROUGH ALL OF THE BUTT SOLDIER BONES, BUT IT'S BIG ENOUGH TO LET DECENTLY-SIZED GROUPS GET THROUGH TO EARTH! AND CLOSE ENOUGH TO WHERE THE ENEMY ARMIES ARE THAT THEY CAN ATTACK THEM BOTH QUICKLY!



BAHHHH Hoop Hoop BOO! ACKACKACK BOO!



AT THE TIME IF I'D KNOWN ABOUT SCIMOCOG A LOCAL GOD OF CORRUPTION, I WOULD HAVE EXPLICITLY GONE AGAINST HIM IN THAT RITUAL, BUT THINGS WORKED OUT ANYWAY

IT WAS MUCH LIKE THE TIME I NEEDED TO SUMMON A SWARM OF BEES, BUT WHEN I NEEDED TO PLAY "FLIGHT OF THE BUMBLEBEE" FOR THE RITUAL, MY BRAIN PULLED UP "THE SABRE DANCE"! THE BEES STILL ARRIVED, BUT THEY WERE ALL WIELDING TINY SABRES, BUT, DIGRESS

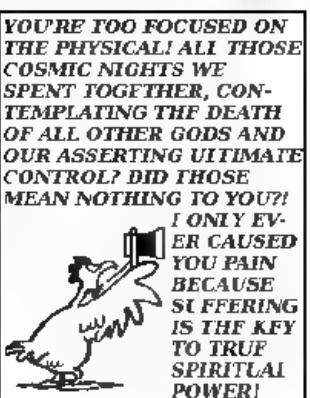
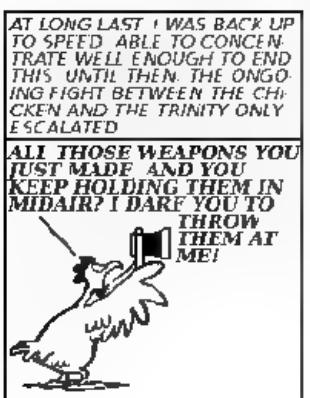
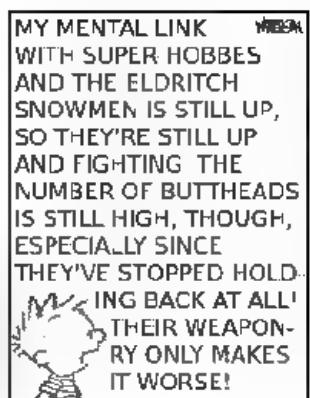
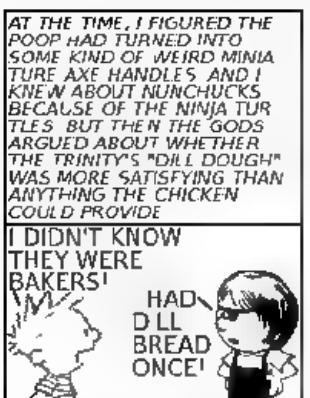
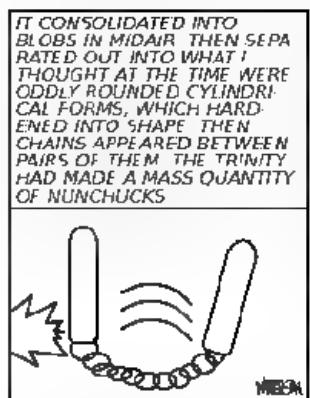
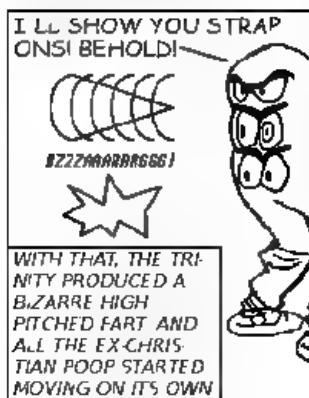
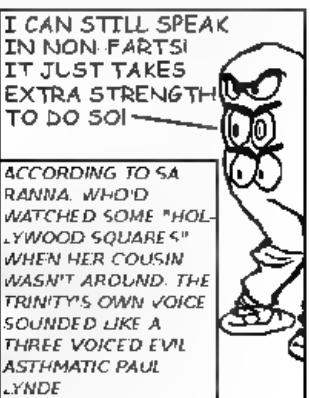
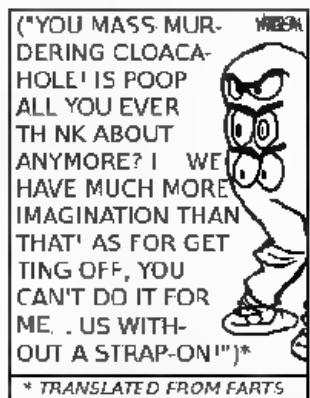
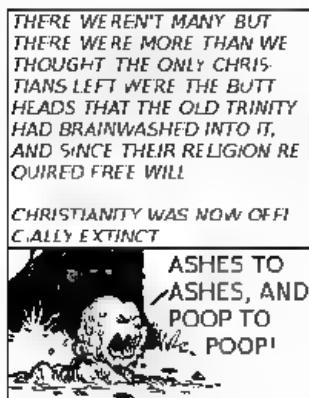
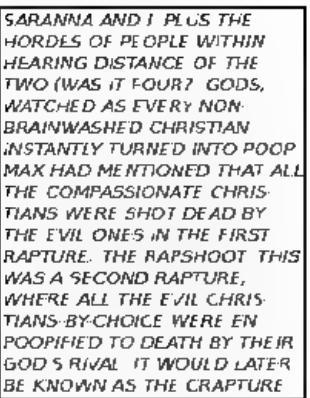
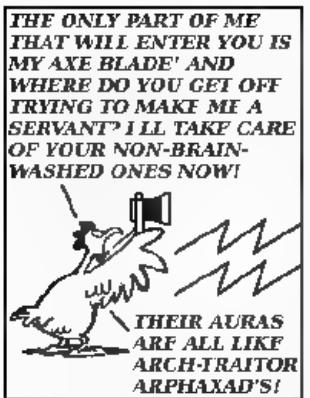
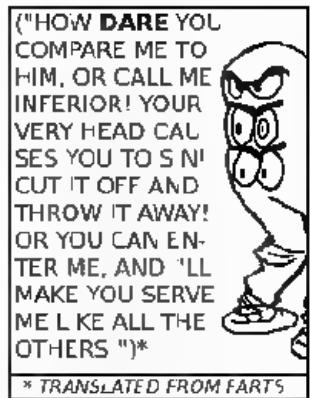
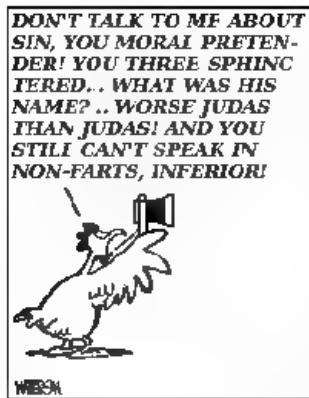
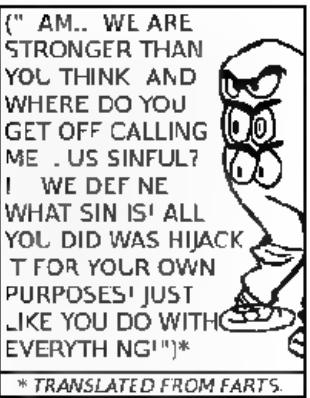
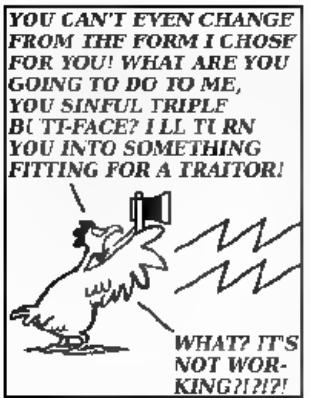
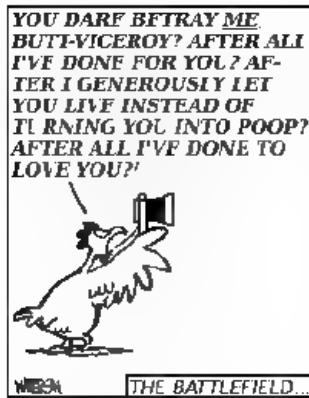
I TELEPATHICALLY CONTACTED BRIAN AND TOLD HIM OF ALL THESE DEVELOPMENTS. THEN SARANNA AND I WAITED FOR THE RIGHT TIME TO DO THE FINAL SUMMONING. THE SCRIVING PORTAL SHOWED A KIND OF BLOODBATH I'D NEVER SEEN BEFORE . . . I WON'T DESCRIBE IT IN ANY MORE DETAIL, OTHER THAN TO SAY I'M GLAD WE PUT A STOP TO IT

THE TRINITY JUST MAGICALLY GAVE HIS BUTTHEADS MILITARY GEAR! THIS WILL BE TOUGHER THAN WE THOUGHT!

HOLY CATS, THERE'S SO MUCH BLOOD! SOME OF YOUR SNOWMEN ARE COLORED PINK BY NOW! I HOPE YOU GET THE SIGN YOU NEED SOON, BECAUSE ALL MY SARANNA-VISION SHOWS RIGHT NOW IS SHADOWS AND FOG!

I SHOULD! I'VE NEARLY RE-COVERED!





SUFFERING THAT YOU GLEEFULLY INFILCT ON OTHERS BUT NEVER YOURSELF! ALL THOSE PEOPLE YOU TURNED INTO THE WALLS FOR YOUR HELL? SO MANY OF THEM WERE GOOD CHRISTIANS! DID YOU CARE ONE WHIT FOR WHAT I WANTED WITH THEM BEFORE YOU WHIPPED OUT THE AXE?



OH, STOP WHINING! I GAVE YOU NEW POWERS BY COMBINING THE THREE OF YOU INTO ONE, I LET YOU STAND BESIDE ME WHEN I CONQUERED THIS WORLD, AND THIS IS HOW YOU REPAY ME? STILL COWARDLY ENOUGH TO HOLD THOSE NUNCHUCKS INSTEAD OF THROWING THEM ALREADY?



WE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE A MERRY FOURLSOME DROWNING THE UNBELIEVERS IN A SEA OF BLOOD FOR AS LONG AS WE WANTED, BUT YOU HAD TO GO AND RUIN THAT BY WANTING TO BE IN CHARGE AGAIN, YOU MOTHERLESS RECTUM GO BACK TO FART-SPEECH BEFORF I PUNISH YOU!

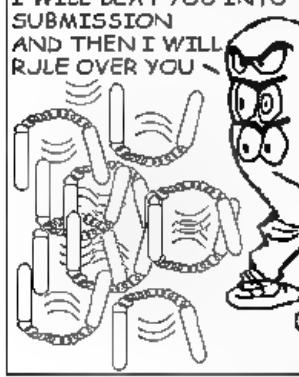


I AM THREE RECTUMS, NOT ONE! AND I HAVE COME NOT TO BRING PEACE, BUT A LEGION OF NUNCHUCKS!



MADE OF... THAT.

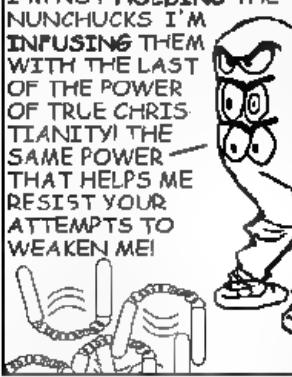
I WILL BEAT YOU INTO SUBMISSION AND THEN I WILL RULE OVER YOU ~



NEVER! YOUR TELE-KINESIS THAT COULD PULL MARS OUT OF ORBIT COMES FROM ME! THOUGH YOU CAN RESIST, I CAN CANCEL OUT MOST OF IT! AND NUNCHUCKS MADE OF THAT MATERIAL WON'T HOLD UP EITHER!



I'M NOT HOLDING THE NUNCHUCKS I'M INFUSING THEM WITH THE LAST OF THE POWER OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY! THE SAME POWER THAT HELPS ME RESIST YOUR ATTEMPTS TO WEAKEN ME!



CALVIN: I'VE GATHERED EVERYTHING! ARE THEY STILL POSTURING? I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW THOSE TWO BONDED AT ALL! SARANNA: YES, THEY'RE STILL GOING. I SUPPOSE IT WILL ALL MAKE SENSE WHEN WE GROW UP. (SOME OF IT DID, SOME OF IT VERY MUCH DIDN'T) WHATEVER YOU THROW AT ME, I CAN THROW RIGHT BACK! BRING IT ON, FOOL!



IT WAS TIME FOR ME TO DO THE FINAL SUMMONING. THE TWO GODS WERE ABOUT TO FIGHT TO THE DEATH OF AT LEAST ONE OF THEM WHICH MADE THEM EASIER TO DEFEAT.

I'LL CREATE A PILLOW TO SMOOTHER YOU WITH AFTER I WIN AGAINST YOU REGARDLESS! I WILL WIN!



YEARS LATER WHEN I UNDERSTOOD SO MUCH MORE I WATCHED A RECORDING OF THE LUMBERCHICKEN AND THE TRINITY TURNED TRIPLE BUTT PERSON TELEKINETICALLY BEATING EACH OTHER WITH MASS QUANTITIES OF THEIR CHRISTIANITY-AND-GENOCIDE POWERED POOP DILDO NUNCHUCKS.

IT WAS IMMENSELY SATISFYING TO KNOW THAT EVIL COULD EITHER DEFEAT ITSELF OR COME VERY CLOSE TO IT, AND I'D HELPED ENSURE ITS DEFEAT EITHER WAY.

AT THE TIME I ONLY SAW A LITTLE OF IT AS I RAN FROM THE SCRYING PORTAL TO THE SUMMONING ROOM, AND I DIDN'T HAVE THE POWER TO BE IN MULTIPLE PLACES AT ONCE AT LEAST NOT THEN.

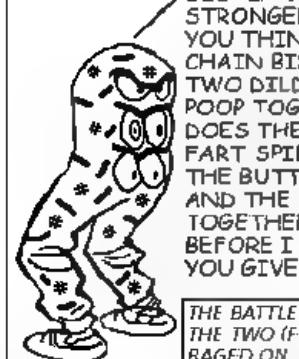


MENTALLY SIGNALLED TO SUPER HOBBE'S THAT I NEEDED HIS PRESENCE FOR THE RITUAL. HE WAS MOMENTARILY RELUCTANT TO LEAVE THE BATTLE BEHIND BUT HE DID. HE USED HIS VOID POWER TO BEND SPACE TIME AND TRAVEL DIRECTLY TO MY SIDE. THEN I BEGAN PREPARING, WITH HIS HELP.



THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE TWO (FOUR?) GODS RAGED ON

SEE? I WE ARE STRONGER THAN YOU THINK! AS THE CHAIN BINDS THE TWO DILDOS OF POOP TOGETHER, SO DOES THE HOLY FART SPIRIT BIND THE BUTT FATHER AND THE BUTT SON TOGETHER! GIVE UP BEFORE I... WE MAKE YOU GIVE UP!



YOUR WINDY TRIPLE VOICE GIVES ME A HEADACHE, AND YOU'RE STILL NOT STRONG ENOUGH! I'LL CHOP OFF BUTT-JESUS' CHEEKS AND FEED THEM TO THE OTHER TWO OF YOU!



THE FEUDING GODS THREW THE NUNCHUCKS AT EACH OTHER SO HARD THAT THE NUNCHUCKS WERE SOON REDUCED TO A USELESS SLURRY OF POOP AND METAL. THEY THEN TURNED TO TELEKINETICALLY BATTERING EACH OTHER WITH SPACE TIME ITSELF, THAT RISKED CREATING A SINGULARITY AND CAUSING UNIMAGINABLE DESTRUCTION. ALTHOUGH MY ONLY KNOWLEDGE OF THE SITUATION AT THAT POINT WAS A PSYCHIC EMERGENCY BEACON FROM BRIAN'S ANSIBLE, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS A TWIST

I WIN! SO MUCH FOR THE POWER OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY, YOU SIX FACED BUTTHOLE! HA HA HA HA HA! ...WAIT, I SENSE THAT ENERGY. NO FAIR USING YOUR RESURRECTION POWER! I'LL KILL YOU AGAIN UNTIL YOU STAY DEAD!



HOW LONG DO I HAVE? THREE DAYS IS THE SLOWEST... IN OLDER, BETTER TIMES, HE HAD A REFRACTORY PERIOD AS SHORT AS THREE MINUTES... I'LL MAKE YOUR BIG FINAL DEATH AS QUICK AS YOUR TIME BETWEEN LITTLE DEATHS! JUST YOU WAIT!

TOO BAD THE PILLOW WAS DESTROYED!

SARANNA KEPT WATCHING THROUGH THE SCRYING PORTAL. AT THE TIME SHE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND A LOT OF THE SAME THINGS I DIDN'T

SO THE NUNCHUCKS ARE MADE OF BOTH POOP AND DILDO DOUGH SOMEHOW? AND WHAT'S A REFRACTORY PERIOD? NO MATTER. I HOPE CALVIN CAN PULL OFF THE SUMMONING IN TIME!



I SHOULD HAVE GUessed YOU'D TRY TO RESURRECT! YOUR BRAINWASHED ARMY STILL FIGHTS! EVEN SO, LOOK AT YOU NOW, AS HELPLESS AS A FFTUS BEFORE YOU'D GIVE IT TRISOMY 16 AND FORCE IT TO ABORT! WAIT, THAT'S IT! THERE'S MORE THAN ENOUGH METAL HERE! THE LAST OF THE POWER OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY IS NOW.. THE POWER OF TRUE ABORTION



UNTWIST THE TRIPLE-HOOKED COATHANGER, AND NOW.. THE POWER OF TRUE ABORTION COMPELS YOU TO DIE AND STAY DEAD, YOU WEAK TRINITY!



THANK THE GODS FOR THE CHICKEN GOD'S VINDICTIVE STUPIDITY! ALTHOUGH I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT ABORTION IS, AS DE FROM SOMETHING MY COUSIN WOULD RANT ABOUT!



AFTER ONLY TWO AND A HALF MINUTES, A BRIGHT BROWN LIGHT SHONE FROM EACH OF THE DEAD GOD'S THREE BUTT HOLEs, AND THE TRINITY WAS INSTANTLY HEALED AND REVIVED

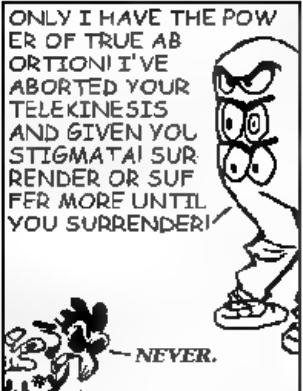


THE CHICKEN WAS VIOLENTLY THROWN OFF, AND THE EX-CHRISTIAN-POWERED ABORTION WIRE BROKE IN HALF. EACH HALF IMPALED ONE OF THE CHICKEN'S WINGS, AND THE WOUNDS KEPT BLEEDING. WHAT? MY TELEKINESIS STOPPED WORKING! I CAN'T PICK UP MY AXE! AND I'M BLIND!

OH ZHAG# GAF#!



ONLY I HAVE THE POWER OF TRUE ABORTION! I'VE ABORTED YOUR TELEKINESIS AND GIVEN YOU STIGMATA! SURRENDER OR SUFFER MORE UNTIL YOU SURRENDER!



'LL HAVE TO LOOK UP WHAT 'OH GRAWL XES!' MEANS WHEN THIS IS ALL OVER! COME ON, YOU CAN DO IT, LOUIE! OR, SHOULD I SAY CALVIN



THE CHICKEN LASHED OUT WITH HIS REMAINING POWERS, NOT CARING WHO HE HIT HE PUSHED THE TRINITY BACK, AND HEIGHTENED ALL HIS SENSES OTHER THAN HIS EYES

HOW MANY OTHERS ARE SPYING ON MY HUMILIATION? YOU'LL ALL PAY!



THAT CAME RIGHT THROUGH THE SCRYING PORTAL! YIKES!



BACK AMONG THE GHOSTS
DESTRUCTION IS IN THEIR NATURE, OR, AS MY PEOPLE SAY,

3906127451293926097-
1948099654711217429-
1911322558699136876-
1890062983095237667-
1825504519250565666-
3087086527630022377-
2700438392796118948.



WAIT, MY ANSIBLE IS PICKING UP A POWER SURGE! ATTEMPTING TO DISCONNECT!



BACK IN THE RITUAL ROOM
OKAY, I'VE DONE THE RITUAL MUSICAL INTERLUDE. WAIT, BRIAN'S SIGNAL'S BEEN CUT OFF!

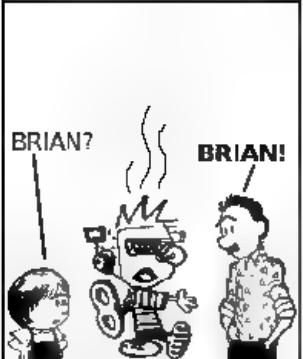
I HOPE SOME THING HASN'T GONE WRONG!



I HOPE SO TOO, BUT WE CAN'T WAIT ANY LONGER! GRAB DAD'S SKULL AND HE'D BE IN STUFFED-TIGER FORM. WE NEED BOTH A FRIEND AND AN ENEMY FOR THE NEXT PART OF THE RITUAL!



BACK AMONG THE GHOSTS



IN TIFFANY'S OFFICE



BACK IN THE RITUAL ROOM
WAIT, THAT WAS SARANNA SHOUTING! THE CHICKEN'S ATTACKING THROUGH PORTALS?!

I'LL HANDLE THIS AS QUICLY AS I CAN!



HE CLEARED HIS THROAT AND SPOKE IN A COLD VOICE...

MY HOLY PRO-NOUNS ARE...



I COULDN'T DISTINGUISH THE NEXT TWO WORDS, BUT THE EFFECT WAS IMMEDIATE. THE BLASTING SOUNDS IN THE BACKGROUND IMMEDIATELY STOPPED, AND I COULD HEAR SOME MILITARY AGENT OF THE CHICKEN SCREAM THAT HIS HELMET WAS MELTING OFF HIS HEAD

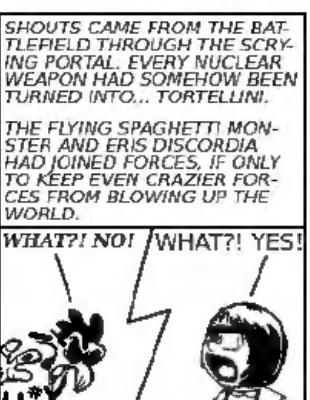
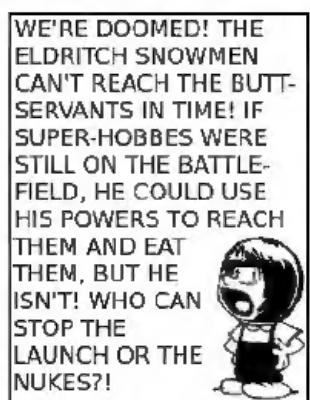
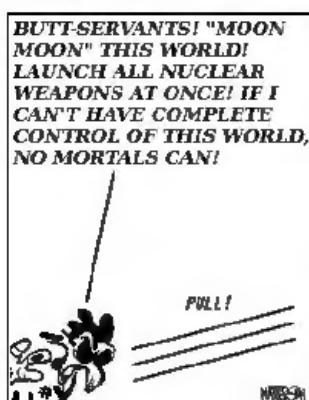
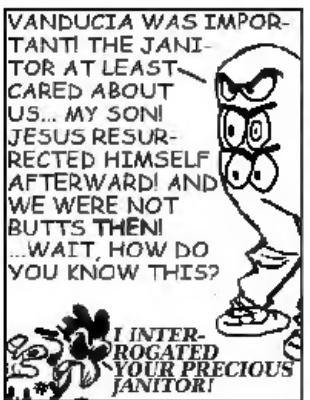
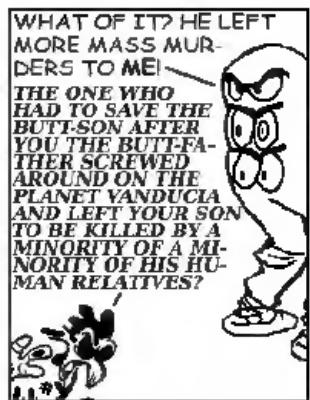
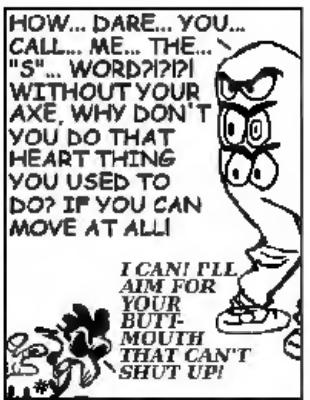
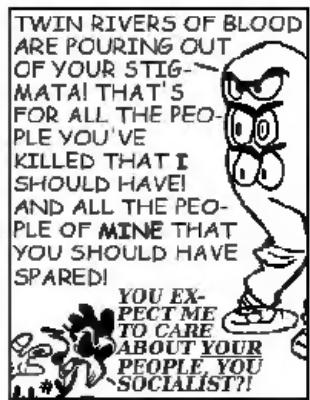
WHAT PRONOUNERY IS THIS? I AM GOD, GOD, GOD!

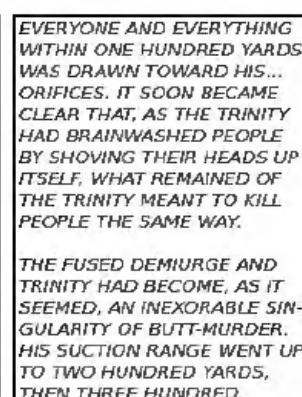
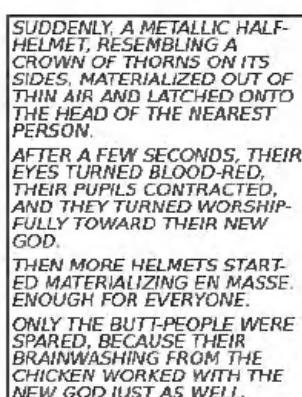
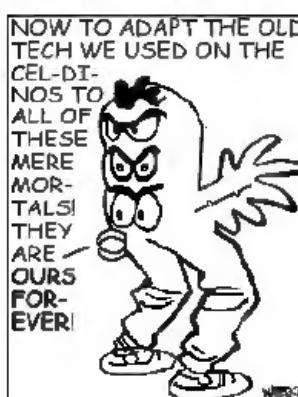
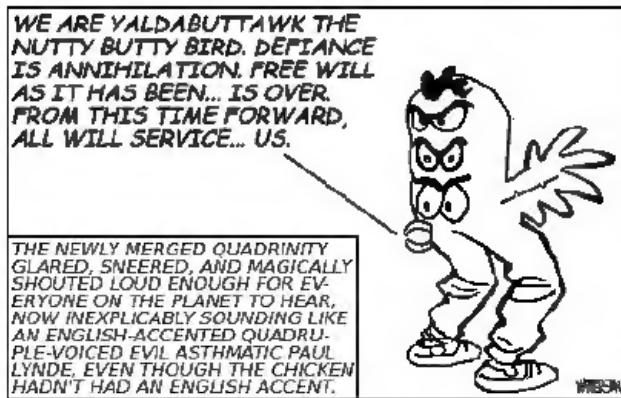
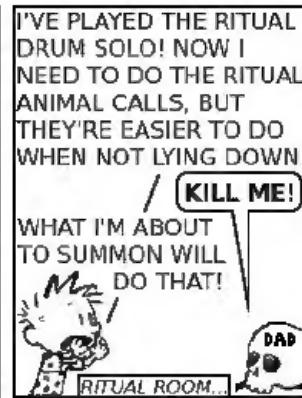
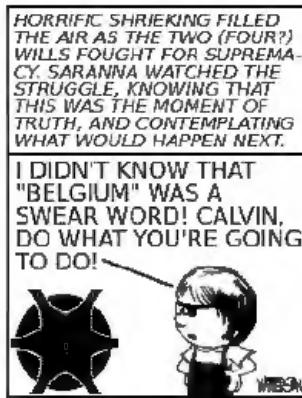
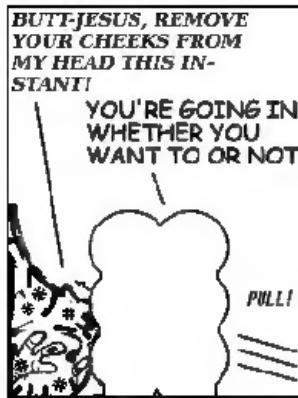


THAT SHOULD SLOW HIM DOWN FOR A BIT! I'LL GO INTO STUFFED-TIGER FORM NOW!

I WISH YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO, BUT WE CAN'T RISK YOUR BEING SEEN AS A THREAT AFTER THE SUMMONING! IT WON'T BE FOR LONG!







THIS GOD'S POWERS OF CONTROLLING MINDS, OF RESURRECTING, AND OF HAVING ANY PRESENCE IN THE LIVING WORLD!



THAT WAS THE GIST OF IT. I HAD TO NEGOTIATE WITH REGARD TO THE NEW GOD'S POTENTIAL FOLLOWERS, SINCE HE WAS NOT GUARANTEED TO RETAIN ALL WORSHIPPERS THAT BOTH ORIGINAL GODS HAD HAD.

I SETTLED ON HAVING HIM EAT THE ONES WHO WERE INCLINED TO WORSHIP THE NEW GOD AND WHO WERE SO CLOSE TO HIM THAT THEY WERE LIKELY TO BE EATEN BY ACCIDENT ANYWAY. BEING MORE SPECIFIC THAN THAT WOULD LEAD TO PROBLEMS.

THIS GOD WHO NAMES HIMSELF YALDABUTTAWK! AMEN, SO MOYE IT BE, FNORD, KLAZOGA, AND BON APPETIT! GO NOW, ZINCORCAL, AND FEED!



MOST BRANCHES OF DISCORDIANISM USED "FNORD" AS A MAGIC WORD. THE BRAZEN EIGHT SECT TREATED THE NUMBER EIGHT AS THE KEY TO EVERYTHING, INSTEAD OF THE NUMBER FIVE, AND ITS MAGIC WORD WAS "KLAZOGA." I HAD HEARD TRACES OF ERI'S LAUGHTER OUTSIDE FOR WHATEVER REASON, SO IT SEEMED APPROPRIATE.



IT'S NOT LIKE THE WORLD NEARLY BLEW UP IN MY ABSENCE, RIGHT?



it is done. he was delicious, if a bit gancy. much like the morsels surrounding him! bye, mortal!

I'D HEARD WHAT SOUNDED LIKE A LOUD "GLOMPI" SOUND OUTSIDE. I WONDERED HOW HUNGRY ZINCORCAL REALLY WAS, CONSIDERING HE WAS EATING SNOWMEN FROM HIS OWN DIMENSION WHEN I CALLED UPON HIM. THEN AGAIN, MAYBE I DIDN'T WANT TO KNOW, LEST THE PRICE OF LEARNING THE ANSWER WAS BEING HIS NEXT MEAL.

AS FAR AS I KNEW, IT WAS OVER. THE DEMIURGE, IN WHATEVER FORM, WAS DEAD, AND MONOTHEISM WITH HIM, BARRING SOME ODD CASES.

AN ONI MESSENGER FILLED ME IN ON WHERE YALDABUTTAWK ACTUALLY WAS: TRAPPED AS A GHOST, ALONG WITH THOSE FOLLOWERS EATEN ALONG WITH HIM, IN ZINCORCAL'S INTESTINE-DIMENSION. THE ONLY EXIT FROM IT WAS TO THE EAST OF WHERE HE WAS, AND IT WAS BARRED WITH AN IMPENETRABLE BARRIER OF THE WEAPON HE MOST FEARED.



IN OTHER NEWS, THE CHICKEN HAD KILLED BRIAN, WHICH EXPLAINED WHY I HADN'T HEARD ANYTHING FROM HIM DURING THE RITUAL, ALTHOUGH I HADN'T BEEN FOCUSING ON HIM EITHER. HIS AFTERLIFE PAPERWORK HAD BEEN FILLED OUT IN ADVANCE, THOUGH, SO HIS GHOST GOT TO BE WITH THE SAME FRIENDS HE'D MADE IN LIFE.



VISITING THE LIVING WILL BE HARDER FOR US ALL NOW! WE'LL FIND A WAY!

THE CHRISTIANS WEREN'T EVEN IN THE CHICKEN'S HELL. HE'D SENT THEM ELSEWHERE.

THERE WAS A THIRD KIND OF POOP GHOST NOW: THE ONES THE CHICKEN TURNED HIS ENEMIES INTO TO SILENCE THEM, THE ANIMISTIC GHOSTS OF ALL POOP, AND THESE: THE VIOLENT CONFORMIST CHRISTIANS TURNED TO POOP IN BOTH BODY AND SOUL.

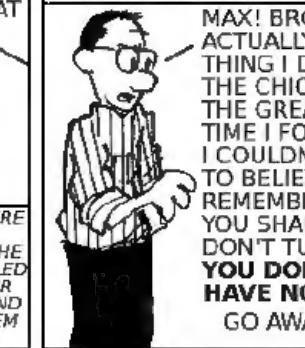
THEIR AFTERLIFE WAS A PLANE OF PERPETUAL POOP, BUT THEY DIDN'T MIND, FOR WHAT THEY WANTED MOST WAS A PLACE WHERE EVERYONE WAS LIKE THEM AND ALL THEIR NEEDS WERE CATERED TO FLAWLESSLY. THEY COULD ALSO FIGHT UNTIL THEY WERE ALL POOP-PULP AND HEAL UP AGAIN THE NEXT DAY.

♪ GLO-O-ORIA IN EXCRETA DEO... ♪
I'M NOT SURE THAT LATIN'S RIGHT... HOW ABOUT I DO THE CHRISTIAN THING AND BEAT YOU FOR TRYING TO CORRECT ME?!



THEY WERE FINALLY HAPPY. THE ONI SEALED OFF THEIR PLANE AND LEFT THEM THERE.

EXCEPT FOR ONE PARTICULAR CHRISTIAN, WHO SHOWED UP IN THE GHOST PLANE IN ONE LAST-DITCH ATTEMPT TO MAKE AMENDS. THE ATTEMPT WENT AS WELL AS YOU'D EXPECT.



MAX! BROTHER OF MINE! I WASN'T ACTUALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ANYTHING I DID UNDER THE TRINITY OR THE CHICKEN! I SERVED THEM FOR THE GREATER GOOD, AND BY THE TIME I FOUND OUT THEY WERE EVIL, I COULDN'T BACK OUT! YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE ME AND FORGIVE ME! REMEMBER, IF YOU DON'T FORGIVE, YOU SHALL NOT BE FORGIVEN! DON'T TURN YOUR BACK ON ME! IF YOU DON'T FORGIVE ME, YOU HAVE NO MORALS!

GO AWAY. YOU'RE NOT MY FAMILY.

I STILL LOVE YOU! YOU WOULDN'T HAVE GONE THROUGH ANY PAIN OR SUFFERING IF YOU'D JUST ACTED THE PROPER WAY! IT'S YOUR FAULT, NOT MINE!



HE WOULDN'T LEAVE WILLINGLY. AN ONI SECURITY GUARD FINALLY SHOWED UP AND REMOVED HIM.

I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE IS NOW. NEITHER MAX, SUSIE, NOR BRIAN EVER SAW HIM AGAIN. ANYWHERE.

THE HOUSE I GREW UP IN, SO NEAR THE DUNGEON, WAS IN HIS NAME. MOM HAD LOST CLAIM TO IT WHEN THE CHICKEN TURNED HER INTO A BUTT-SERVANT, TO SAY NOTHING OF WHEN SHE DIED, AND HE'D DISOWNED ME WHEN HE'D THROWN ME IN THE DUNGEON. SO THERE WAS NO CHANCE OF ITS PASSING TO ME.

ALSO, THE SUCKING DAMAGE FROM YALDABUTTAWK'S MASS BUTT-MURDER HAD DAMAGED IT ENOUGH TO MAKE IT UNINHABITABLE.

THIS MEANT I HAD TO FIND SOMEWHERE ELSE TO LIVE. THE DUNGEON'S BEING UNDERGROUND SHIELDED IT FROM THE DAMAGE THE HOUSE HAD TAKEN. WITH THE DEMIURGE FINALLY GONE, THE GOBLINS WERE FREE TO MAKE THE DUNGEON A LIVABLE SPACE RATHER THAN A PRISON.

TELL ME MORE ABOUT THESE LAVA LAMPS!



LAMPS WITH MORE AESTHETIC THAN THE USUAL, AND IN A VARIETY OF COLORS!



KRALTAZ LEFT AND FINALLY JOINED THE REST OF HIS PEOPLE. HE PROMISED TO STAY IN TOUCH.



BLONZZZ!

SEBASTIAN AND THE OTHER CEL-YE-TIS WENT BACK TO THEIR OWN DIMENSION, AS DID THE ELDRITCH ENTITIES ANIMATING MY SNOWMAN ARMY. THER'D BEEN A FAIR NUMBER OF CASUALTIES, WHICH REQUIRED MORE HONORING OF THE DEAD, BUT TAKING DOWN THE DEMIURGE WAS WORTH THE SACRIFICE.

SEBASTIAN PROMISED TO STAY IN TOUCH, TOO.

WHO KNOWS WHAT OTHER UNORTHODOX APPLICATIONS OF CHI THERE ARE? I'LL FIND OUT!

Chris Pirih

I HADN'T HAD MUCH TIME TO GET TO KNOW CLYDE, GIVEN HOW MUCH OF OUR TIME THE WAR HAD TAKEN UP, BUT IT WAS ABOUT TO CHANGE. HE MOVED INTO THE DUNGEON WITH SARANNA AND ME, AND WE ALL FOCUSED ON LIVING LIKE NORMAL PEOPLE. FOR OUR... MORE EXTENSIVE VERSION OF NORMAL.

I FINALLY GOT THE WILDFIRE IN MY SOCK DRAWER UNDER CONTROL!

DARE I ASK HOW A WILDFIRE STARTED THERE?

Jim Davis



IT WAS THE END OF MY... OUR FIRST ADVENTURE. ALTHOUGH THERE WERE SO MANY MORE TO COME. THE NEXT ONE STARTED AWHILE LATER. WHEN CLYDE OFFERED TO TAKE US TO VISIT AUNT WALBURGA, WHOSE EXTRADIMENSIONAL EXILE HAD, OF COURSE, ENDED.



I AM NO LONGER
ZARB! I AM NOW
DIMENSIONALIST
GHULZARBIS!

THANK YOU!
THE BUTT-
PEOPLE SAID
THE SAME!

CONGRATU-
LATI0NS!



SO WHAT IS
THIS OTHER
DIMENSION
LIKE, ANYWAY?
I HAVEN'T
SEEN ALL
THAT MANY!



I SUPPOSE
WE'LL FIND
OUT!

I'M GOING
HOME NOW!

THE
END...
UNTIL
NEXT
TIME!

JPM DAVIS